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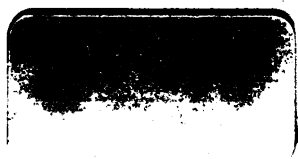
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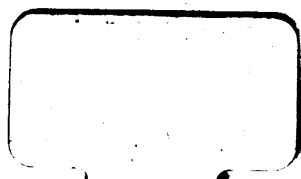
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ROMAN EMPERORS,
FROM
AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

BY JOHN BAPTIST LEWIS CREVIER,
PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC, IN THE COLLEGE OF BEAUVAIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY JOHN MILL, ESQ.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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A LIST

Of the Consuls and Years comprised in this Volume.

GALBA, EMPEROR.

C. Silius Italicus,	A. R. 819.
M. Galerius Trachalus,	A. C. 68.
Ser. Sulpicius Galba,	A. R. 820.
Cæsar Augustus II.	A. C. 69.
T. Vinius Rufinus.	

OTHO, EMPEROR.

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HISTORY
OF THE
ROMAN EMPERORS,
FROM AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

GALBA.

BOOK XIII.

SECT. I.

Reflection on the liberty taken by the soldiery to dispose of the empire. Galba receives the news of Nero's death, and of the senate's decree by which he is declared emperor. Virginius again refuses the empire, and makes his legions acknowledge Galba. The army on the lower Rhine likewise swears fidelity to Galba. Death of Capito who commanded it. Macer killed in Africa, where he was endeavouring to raise an insurrection. All the provinces acknowledge Galba. Nymphidius's intrigues to raise himself to the empire. He is killed by the Prætorians. Galba's cruelties on that occasion. He degenerates from his first taste for simplicity. He lets Vinus, Cornelius Laco, and Martianus govern him. He affects to appear formidable. Instances of his rigour. Massacre of

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Reflection
on the li-
berty taken
by the sol-
diery to
dispose of
the empire.

THE extinction of the family of the Cæsars is an important period in the history of the Roman emperors. Till then, though arms had been the origin, strength, and support of

of the imperial government, yet a kind of hereditary right restrained and limited the power of the soldiers, and prevented their disposing of the empire quite as they pleased. By Nero's * death, says Tacitus, a secret of state was divulged : it was known that an emperor might be made elsewhere than in Rome ; and, which was of much more consequence, that force alone was what determined the choice, and that the troops were absolute masters of that force.

The enormous reward promised by Nymphidius to the prætorians, carried the evil to its utmost height. It was quite contrary to the public good to let the soldiers dispose of the empire : they learned to sell it. Thence ensued a chain of revolutions and tragical catastrophes. Galba being neither able nor willing to comply with Nymphidius's promise, the prætorians, frustrated of their hopes, turned to Otho. The armies in the provinces pretended they had as good a right to make an emperor as the prætorians; and were for raising their chiefs to the throne. By that means, in a very short space of time, three emperors made their appearance with great rapidity, almost like so many theatrical kings. The Roman empire was a continued scene of trouble and confusion, till the wisdom of Vespasian and his first successors, Domitian excepted, restored the tranquillity and order violence had overthrown.

But the radical vice still subsisted. The troops, whose duty is obedience, were grown too sensible of their ascendant over the civil power

* Evulgato imperii arcano, posse alibi principem quam Romæ fieri. Tac. Hist. I. 4.

HISTORY OF THE EMPERORS.

power ever to forget it. The princes, the most firmly settled on the throne, were obliged to use them very tenderly. At last they entirely gained the upper hand. The caprice of the soldiers, made and unmade emperors, and by repeated shocks, at length caused the total ruin of the empire. Such is the frailty of all human things, that they bear the seeds of their own destruction, even in what constitutes their force. But to resume the order of events.

A. R. 819.

C. SILIUS ITALICUS.

A. C. 68.

M. GALERIUS TRACHALUS.

Galba receives the news of Nero's death, and of the senate's decree, by which he is declared emperor.

Plut. Galb.

At the time of Nero's death, which, as I have said, happened on the eleventh of June, Galba was at Clunia, in great consternation, expecting nothing but death, when Icelus arrived from Rome with news that his enemy was no more. The moment Icelus was sure of the fact, and had seen with his own eyes Nero's dead body, he instantly left Rome, and travelled with such diligence, that in seven days he reached Clunia, where he informed Galba, that the prætorian cohorts, and after their example, the senate and people had proclaimed him emperor, even before Nero's death; and likewise told him of that prince's fatal end, by which that high post was left vacant for him.

Suet. Galb.
11.

At this news, joy and confidence took the place of sorrow and almost despair in Galba's breast. A numerous court of people of all ranks, each of whom strove who should congratulate him most, was immediately formed about him; and two days after, a courier bringing

bringing from the senate a confirmation of A.R. 819. what Icelus had said, he laid aside the title of A. C. 68. *Lieutenant to the senate and Roman people*, and took the name of *Cæsar*, which was become an indication of the supreme power, and immediately prepared to set out for Rome to take possession of it.

Icelus was well rewarded for his journey. *Tac. Hist. I. 13.* His patron becoming emperor, gave him the ring of gold and made him a knight, by the name of *Martianus*, to conceal the obscurity of his first condition; and suffered him to assume a degree of power and authority, of which that servile wretch made a very bad use.

Every thing succeeded with Galba at first; *Virginius again refuses the empire. and makes his legions acknowledge Galba. Plut.* *Virginius* persisted in his plan of referring the choice of an emperor to the senate. After Nero's death, the legions of which he had the command, again pressed him to let them seat him on the throne of the Cæsars; and a tribune went so far as to present his naked sword, and say he should either receive the empire, or that sword in his body. Nothing could make that great man deviate from his principles of moderation: and he insisted so strongly with his troops to induce them to acknowledge the emperor the senate had chose, that at last he prevailed on them with great difficulty to swear fidelity to Galba.

He did more: for Galba having sent *Hordeonius Flaccus* to succeed him, *Virginius* *Tac. Hist. I. 8.* gave up the command of his army to that lieutenant, and waited on the emperor, who had invited him to court, as if out of friendship. He was received but coolly; and, by an expression of Tacitus, we find there was even an

A.R. 819. an accusation lodged against him. He suffered
 A. C. 68. no harm from it. Galba, who without doubt
Plut. would have wished him more zealous in his
 cause, could not, however, but esteem his vir-
 tue: but was prevented from shewing that
 esteem by those about him, who thought they
 did a great deal, in letting a man live who
 had so often been proclaimed emperor: Envy
 was what induced them to strive to keep him
 under. They were not sensible, says Plutarch,
 of the service they were doing him, nor that
 their ill will contributed to the good fortune of
 Virginus, by procuring him a peaceable asy-
 lum, whereby he was screened from the com-
 motions and storms in which so many emperors
 perished one after another.

The army
 on the
 lower
 Rhine like-
 wise swears
 fidelity to
 Galba.
 Death of
 Capito,
 who com-
 manded it.
Tac. Hist.
I. 7.
Dio. Galb.

The army, in lower Germany, likewise de-
 clared for Galba, but it cost Fonteius Capito,
 who commanded it, his life. He was a very
 different kind of man from Virginus, and had
 made himself odious by his covetousness and
 over-bearing pride. It has been said, that he
 aimed at the supreme power; and a circum-
 stance mentioned by Dion Cassius seems to con-
 firm that suspicion. A person accused, appeal-
 ing from that lieutenant's sentence to Cæsar,
 Capito getting on to a higher seat, said,
 "Now then, plead before Cæsar:" and for-
 cing him to proceed in his defence, condemned
 him to die. This action was very daring, and
 might be thought to indicate ambitious views.
 What is certain is, that Cornelius Aquinus and
 Fabius Valius, who commanded under him
 two legions of his army, without waiting for
 Galba's orders, killed him under pretence of his
 turbulent designs. It was thought by some,
 that

Tac.

that they themselves had urged him to aim at the empire, but that, not being able to prevail on him, they were willing, by his death, to get rid of a witness that might hurt them. Galba approved the murder of Capito, either from a levity of mind, which made him credulous, or because he did not dare to search too deep into so nice an affair, for fear of finding other criminals whom it might not be in his power to punish. Thus it was that Galba was acknowledged emperor by the two German armies.

Clodius Macer attempted to foment disturbances in Africa. Detested for his rapines and cruelties he judged he had no other resource left, but to try to make a little state and dominion of his own, out of the province of which he had the government. He was assisted in that design by Galvia Crispinilla, a woman as daring, as she was learned in the arts of debauchery, in which she had given Nero lessons. We have seen her accompany that prince into Greece. At the time I am speaking of she crossed over into Africa, and in concert with Macer attempted to starve Rome and Italy, by laying an embargo on the ships ready to sail with corn. But Trebonius Garucianus, the emperor's intendant, killed Macer by Galba's order, and by that means restored tranquillity to the country.

Every thing was quiet in the other provinces, and all submitted to Galba with great docility. It has been said that he took umbrage against Vespasian, at that time making war against the Jews, and sent assassins to kill him. That does not seem probable: at least it is certain

Vespasian

A. R. 819.
A. C. 68.

Macer killed in Africa,

where he was endeavouring to raise an insurrection.
Plut. Galb.
Tac. Hist. l. 7. 11. & 7. 3.

All the provinces acknowledge Galba.
Suet. Galb. c. 23.

A.R.819. **Vespasian** was not informed of it; for he sent
 A. C. 68. his son **Titus** to pay homage to the new emperor.

Tac. Hist.

IL. 1.

Nymphidius's intrigues to raise himself to the empire.
Plut.

Rome, by which city the suffrages of the provinces had been determined in favour of **Galba**, by a sudden turn, gave him great disturbances and alarms. The cause of that evil was, the ambition of **Nymphidius**, who, aspiring at the throne, had possessed himself of great authority in the city. He held **Galba** in contempt, as a feeble old man, hardly able to bear being brought to Rome in a litter. On the other hand he ascribed to himself all the glory of **Nero's** fall, and depended on being strongly backed by the prætorian cohorts, whose long affection towards him had acquired a new degree of warmth, by the immense gratuity he had promised them, and which made them look on **Nymphidius** as their benefactor, and on **Galba** as their debtor.

Full of those presumptuous thoughts, he ordered his colleague **Tigellinus** to resign the sword of prætorian prefect. He endeavoured to gain over the chief members of the senate, by inviting those of consular distinction, and the ancient prætors, to entertainments in **Galba's** name, but in reality with a view to his own interest. He had his private emissaries in the prætorian camp, who exhorted the soldiers to petition **Galba**, that **Nymphidius** might be made their sole commander for his life. The senate's abject meanness added to his ambitious frenzy. That first body of the empire stiled him their protector. The senators flocked in crowds to pay their court to him: and would have him dictate and confirm all their decrees. Puffed up

up with such excess of deference and regard, ^{A. R. 819.} he soon became formidable to those whose aim ^{A. C. 68.} had been to gain his favour.

The consuls had dispatched some of the public slaves to carry Galba the decree by which he was declared emperor; and had given them orders, sealed with their seals, to be supplied with horses on the road. Nymphidius took it very ill, that they had not desired some of his soldiers for that commission, nor made use of his seal. He was so angry at it, that he deliberated seriously how to make the consuls repent what they had done; and those sovereign magistrates were forced to be very submissive before he would be appeased.

With the views Nymphidius had, it was his interest to have the people on his side. He endeavoured to gain their affection, by granting them entire liberty to do whatever they pleased. He suffered the mob to drag Nero's statues about the streets, and over the body of a gladiator, who had been a favourite with that unhappy prince. Aponius, an informer by profession, was laid along on the ground, and crushed to death under a cart loaded with stones: several others, and even some who were innocent, were torn to pieces, which made Junius Mauricus, a man highly esteemed for his wisdom and virtue, say in full senate, "I wish we may not soon be forced to regret Nero."

Nymphidius, supported, as he imagined, by the people and soldiers, and treating the senators like slaves, thought he might safely push on, and take such steps as, without quite discovering himself, would, however, forward the execution

A. R. 819. execution of his designs. Not content to enjoy the honours and riches of supreme power, to imitate Nero in his worst of vices, and like him, to marry the infamous Sporus; nothing less than the title of emperor would serve him: and he studied to gain over the Romans to his mad project, by the means of his friends, of some senators he had bribed, and of intriguing women. At the same time he dispatched one Gellianus, in whom he confided, to Galba, with instructions to sound the new prince, and discover by what means it would be most easy to attack him.

Gellianus found things in a situation fit to make Nymphidius despair. Galba had named Cornelius Laco prætorian prefect: T. Vinus had an entire ascendant over the emperor, and nothing was done but by his orders: so that Nymphidius's emissary, suspected and watched by all, could not obtain a private audience of Galba.

Nymphidius alarmed by Gellianus's report, assembled the principal officers of the prætorian cohorts, and told them, "That Galba was a venerable old man, and full of mildness and moderation: but that he did hardly any thing of himself, being under the direction and influence of two ministers whose intentions were not good, Vinus and Laco. That therefore, before they could strengthen themselves, and insensibly acquire a power equal to that of Tigellinus, it was proper to send deputies to the emperor's camp, to represent to him, that, by removing only those two men from his person and court, he would be more beloved, and, on his arrival
in

“ in Rome find the hearts of the people better A. R. 819.
“ disposed in his favour.” Nymphidius’s pro- A. C. 68.
posal was not relished. It was thought indecent to pretend to give lessons to an emperor of Galba’s years, and prescribe to him, as to a young unexperienced sovereign just beginning to taste the sweets of command, who it was proper he should have about him.

Nymphidius then tried another trick, endeavouring to intimidate Galba by magnifying the dangers. He wrote him word, that the Romans were in a great ferment, and threatened a new revolution: that Clodius Macer (whose death I have anticipated the mention of) grew turbulent in Africa: that the Legions in Germany had their causes of discontent, which might soon break out, and that he was informed those in Syria and Judæa were not better disposed. Galba was not the dupe of these artifices, nor intimidated by a representation of things visibly exaggerated with design; but proceeded on towards Rome. Nymphidius concluding Galba’s arrival must be his ruin, resolved to prevent it. Clodius Celsus of Antioch, one of his staunchest friends, and a man of sense, dissuaded him from the attempt, assuring him that not a family in Rome would ever give the name of Cæsar to Nymphidius. But most of them laughed at his reserve; and particularly Mithridates, king of a part of Pontus, who, as I have before said, submitted to Claudius, and had remained in Rome ever since, ridiculed Galba’s bald head and wrinkled face, and said, the good old man might appear something to the Romans, whilst at a distance, but that when seen nearer, he would
be

A.R. 819. be judged a shame to the name of Cæsar.—

A. C. 68. This way of thinking, so agreeable to Nymphidius's ambition, was approved; and his partisans agreed to carry him towards midnight to the prætorian camp, and there proclaim him emperor.

He is killed
by the præ-
torians.

Part of the troops had been bribed: but Antonius Honoratus, tribune of a prætorian cohort, broke all their measures. Towards the evening, he assembled those that were under his command, and represented to them what a shame it would be to them to change their minds so often in so short a time, and that without any just cause, without being influenced in their choice by any regard to the public welfare, but as if urged on from rebellion to rebellion, by some evil genius. "Our first change (added he) had a sufficient cause, and Nero's crimes justified what we did. But can we tax Galba with having murdered his mother and his wife? Are we put to the blush by our present emperor's appearing on the stage? Nor did we even for those causes abandon Nero: Nymphidius deceived us, by making us believe that prince had first abandoned us and was fled to Egypt. Is Galba then a victim to be offered up on Nero's tomb? Shall we call Nymphidius's son Cæsar, and kill a prince nearly related to Livia, as we forced the son of Agrippina to kill himself? No! let us rather make this man suffer for his iniquitous attempts, and at one blow revenge Nero, and prove our fidelity to Galba." This speech made a strong impression on the soldiers who heard it: they communicated their sentiments to

to their comrades, and brought back the great-^{A. R. 819.}
 er number to their duty. A sudden shout was^{A. C. 68.}
 heard, and all ran to arms.

This shout was a signal, at which Nymphidius repaired to the camp, either imagining the soldiers called him, or that he saw confusion was at hand. Accordingly he went thither lighted by numbers of torches, and having a speech ready composed by Cingonius Varro consul elect, which he had learnt by rote, to make to the body of prætorians. Drawing near, he found the gates shut, and the walls lined with soldiers. Terrified, he asked them what was the matter, and why they were under arms? He was answered by an unanimous cry, that Galba was their emperor.—Nymphidius, putting on the best face he could, joined in their acclamations, and ordered his attendants to do the like: but that artifice did not save him. He was admitted within the camp, but it was to give him a thousand stabs: and when dead, his body was enclosed in an iron cage, and exposed to the view of all the troops.

This was a lucky beginning for Galba, who, ^{Galba's} without interfering in it himself, was delivered ^{cruelties on} from an unworthy rival, whose turbulent ge- ^{that occa-} nius was to be feared. But he dishonoured by his cruelty, this favour received from the hand of fortune. He ordered Mithridates and Cingonius Varro to be killed as accomplices with Nymphidius. Petronius Turpilianus, whom Nero had chosen for his general, was likewise put to death by Galba's order: and those illustrious persons, executed in a military manner*,
 and

* Inauditi atque indefensi, tanquam innocentes perierant. *Tac. Hist.* l. 6.

A.R. 819. and without any form of law, seemed in the
A. C. 68. eyes of the public innocents oppressed.

He degenerates
from his
first taste
for simplicity.

Far different things were expected from Galba's government, and every act of violence was the more shocking in him, as none had foreseen or thought of such behaviour. Already he began to degenerate from that love of simplicity with which he at first pretended to set out. Every one was charmed with the manner in which he received the senate's deputies at Narbonne. The reception they met with was quite gracious and void of all haughtiness and ostentation: in the entertainments he gave them, he would not make use of the officers and attendants that had belonged to Nero, and were sent to wait on him, but was content with his own domestics. In * consequence of that, he was looked upon as a man of a superior way of thinking, above all that idle ostentation vulgarly called grandeur. But Vinus, who gained every day a greater ascendant over Galba, soon made him change his system, and renounce that ancient simplicity; telling him, that instead of those plain and popular ways, which were but a kind of unbecoming flattery towards the multitude, he ought to maintain his high rank, with a magnificence worthy the master of the universe. Galba therefore took all Nero's officers and attendants: his palace, equipages, table, and train, were those of an emperor.

He lets Vinus, Cornelius Laco, and Martianus govern him.

Vinus, whom we shall see for some months the greatest man in the empire, little deserved the confidence of a prince like Galba. Born of

* Εὐδοκίμου, μεγάλῳφρων αἰτὴ καὶ κρείττων ἀπύργο λαλίας φαστομίτης.
Plut.

of a good family, but which, however, had never rose higher than the post of prætor, his youth had been very dissolute, and in his first campaigns he had dared to dishonour his general Calvisius Sabinus, by debauching his wife, who was brought into the camp in men's clothes. Caligula put him in irons for that crime: Being set at liberty by the revolution that followed that prince's death, Vinus fell into another disgrace, but of a different kind, under Claudius. He was suspected of having been mean enough to steal a gold cup from the emperor's table, to which he was invited: and Claudius desiring his company again the next day, ordered him only of all the company to be served in earthen ware. He got the better however of this double shame: active, ardent, and as cunning as he was audacious, he succeeded in the road to honours so far as to be made prætor: and, what is more singular, governed the province of Narbonnese Gaul with a reputation of severity and integrity. He was one * of those characters, equally pliable to good or ill, as occasions offer, and which seldom fail to succeed in whatever they turn their talents to. Raised by Galba to a vast height of fortune, the use he made of it was, to give a loose to his vices, and especially to his love of money; and, after shining like a flash of lightning, we shall see him fall with his master, of whose ruin he was in a great measure the cause.

Though

* Audax, callidus, promptus, &, prout animum intendit. set, pravus aut industrius, eadem vi. *Tac. Hist.* 1. 41.

A.R. 819. Though Vinus held the first rank at Galba's
A. C. 68. court, Cornelius Laco, prætorian prefect, had likewise great power and influence: and the * joint union of the most cowardly of men, with the most wicked, drew hatred and contempt on the government of the prince whom they laid siege to. The freeman Icelus or Martianus, shared their authority. They formed a triumvirate of *Pedagogues* for so the Romans called them, because they never left the weak old man, but governed him as they pleased.

Almost all the faults that Galba committed ought to be laid to their charge. He certainly had no great genius, was covetous, and rigorously severe; but in the main he meant well, loved justice, good order, and the laws. Those qualities, so estimable in a sovereign, were of no use to public happiness, through the blind confidence he had in his ministers, who studied only their own ends. The prince was inclined to do good, and wished it; but evil was done, and prevailed with an unbounded licentiousness. Galba was blamed, and very justly, for the bad conduct of those who made an ill use of his authority: for † as Dion Cassius judiciously observes, it is enough for private men not to commit injustice; but those who govern ought to prevent others from committing it.—

It

* Invalidum senem T. Vinus & Corneliu Laco, alter deterrimus mortalium alter ignavissimus, odio flagitiorum oneratum, contemptu inertie destruebant. Tac. Hist. I. 6.

† Τοις μιν γὰρ ἰδίᾳ ταῖς ἀποχρῇ μὴ διὰ δίκην τοῖς τὰς ἡγεμονίας ἔχουσιν ἀναγκῇ προνοεῖν ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλῃ κακουργῇ· εὐδὲ γὰρ διαφέρει τι τοῖς κακῶς παύσσειν ὅποτε ἀνὴρ κακῶσαι. Dio. Galb.

It is of little moment to those who suffer, from what hand the ill comes by which they suffer. A. R. 819. A. C. 68.

I before observed, that Galba had already alienated the people by divers acts of cruelty against persons of great distinction. He affected too a formidable appearance, wearing the military dress, as if he had been about to commence or maintain a war, and having a dagger tied to a ribbon hanging down from his breast. In that manner he travelled almost all the way to Rome, appearing, old, infirm, and gouty as he was, much more ridiculous than tremendous. Nor did he put on the habit of peace till after the death of Nymphidius, Macer and Capito. He affects to appear formidable. Instances of his rigour. Massacre of the marines. Suet. Galb. 11, & 12. His deeds were answerable to the menacing appearance he made. Enraged against the towns of Spain and Gaul, who had hesitated to declare in his favour, he punished some of them by laying on additional taxes, and others by demolishing their walls. Intendants and other officers were put to death with their wives and children: but nothing made him more odious, than the massacre with which he stained his entry into Rome, and made it dreadful indeed. The marines whom Nero had formed into a legion, and who, by that means had acquired a military rank more honourable among the Romans, went as far as Ponte Mole, three miles from the city, to meet Galba, and desire a confirmation of the favour his predecessor had granted them. Galba, rigidly attached to the order of discipline, put them off to another time. They readily conceived this delay equal to a refusal, and persisted in their request with disrespect, some of them even drawing their swords. Such

A.R. 819. insolence deserved to be punished : but Galba
 A. C. 68. exceeded all bounds, ordering the cavalry that
 attended him, to cut those unhappy wretches
 to pieces. They were not properly armed,
 nor did they make any resistance ; but that did
 not prevent their being inhumanly massacred :
 several thousands were killed on the spot.
 Some submitted, imploring the emperor's cle-
 mency, and they were decimated. This bloody
 execution occasioned very just complaints, and
 struck a terror even on those who were the
 ministers of it.

Instances
 of his avarice.
*Suet. &
 Plut.*

His avarice was not less flagrant. The in-
 habitants of Tarragon presenting him a crown
 of gold weighing fifteen pounds, he had it
 melted down, and insisted on three ounces that
 were wanting in the weight. He broke a co-
 hort of Germans, the ordinary guard of the
 Cæsars, whose fidelity had never been tainted,
 and sent them back to their own country with-
 out reward. Some malicious stories were told,
 without doubt on purpose to make him quite
 ridiculous. It was said, that when he saw a
 fine supper set on his table, he would groan
 out of grief and anguish : that to reward the
 care and fidelity of his steward, on settling his
 accounts, he made him a present of a dish of
 greens : and that a famous musician called Ca-
 nus, having delighted him greatly by playing
 on the flute whilst he was at table, had the
 secret to extract from him a present of five
 denarij, he observing it was not out of the
 public money but his own. Such meannesses
 greatly hurt his character. And the general
 esteem that was shown for him at the time of
 his

his election, was already changed into contempt A. R. 819.
when he arrived at Rome. A. C. 68.

It was not long before he had a convincing proof of it; for at a play, or kind of comic opera that was performed, the actors beginning to sing a song at that time very common, the first words of which signified. "Here is the old miser come from his farm." The whole audience went on with it, applying it to Galba, and repeated it several times.

His behaviour did not make people conceive a more advantageous idea of him, because even the laudable measures that he took, were attended with such circumstances as either lessened their value, or robbed them of all their merit, by the scandalous proceedings of those that were about him. In order to fill his empty coffers, he ordered a strict enquiry to be made into the improper liberalities of his predecessor. They were found to amount to two hundred and fifty millions, thrown away upon debauchees, strollers, or ministers of Nero's pleasures. Galba would have all that money returned, allowing only a tenth part to those it had been given to. But * that tenth was almost more than they had left. As prodigal of the money of others as of their own, they had neither lands nor income. All that the richest of them possessed, was only a few moveables, which their luxury and taste, for whatever appertained to vice and effeminacy, made them set a value on. Galba, who was inflexible

Enquiry made into Nero's liberalities. Vexations on that account. Greediness and insolence of Vinus. Tac. Hist. i. 20. Plut. Galb. Suet. Galb.

* At illis vix decumæ super portiones erant, iisdem erga aliena sumptibus quibus sua prodegerant: quum rapacissimo cuique ac perditissimo non agri, aut fœnus, sed sola instrumenta vitiorum manerent. Tac.

A.R. 819. where money was in the case, finding that
 A.C. 68. they who had received such presents from Nero were insolvent, attacked those who had become purchasers under them. We may conceive what troubles and revolutions of fortunes, must ensue from such an operation as this, which affected no less than thirty Roman knights. Several fair purchasers were molested: every street was full of advertisements of estates to be sold. The public was * however delighted to find those whom Nero had enriched, made as poor as those whom he had robbed.

But it was taken very ill that Vinus, who set the emperor upon enquiring into such minute things, and raising chicaneries so irksome to numbers of citizens, should riot in luxury in the sight of those he so cruelly vexed; and, abusing his credit, buy and sell every thing. He was not the only one that carried on that trade. All † Galba's freemen, all his slaves, did the same underhand, endeavouring to make hay while the sun shone, foreseeing it would not shine long. An open traffic was carried on for whatever was wanted to be purchased, establishments of duties, exemptions and privileges, impunity for crimes, and condemnations against the innocent. All the evils of the former, sprung up again under this new government, but the public was not so well disposed to bear them.

The

* Attamen grande gaudium quod tam pauperes forent quibus donasset Nero, quam quibus abstulisset. *Tac.*

† Offerebant venalia cuncta præponentes liberti. Seryorum manus subitis avidæ, & tanquam apud senem festinantes: eademque nova aulæ mala, æque gravia, non æque excusata. *Tac. Hist. l. 7.*

The Romans very greatly hurt too by the inconsistency of Galba's behaviour, in the punishment of those who had been the instruments of Nero's cruelty. Many suffered what their crimes justly merited, such as Helius, Polycletes, Patrobius, Locusta, and others who had nobody to protect them. Such acts of justice were applauded by the people: when those notorious criminals were led to death, they cried out, that no shew, no festival could give Rome more satisfaction than that did; and that their blood was the most agreeable offering that could be made the gods: but at the same time added, that the gods, as well as men, required the death of him, who had formed Nero to so much tyranny, the infamous and wicked Tigellinus.

But that wretch had taken care to follow the usual maxims of those of his stamp, who *, always distrusting the present, and carefully watching every alteration that may happen, take care to screen themselves from the public hatred, under the patronage of some more powerful friends: a sanction, which, whilst it guards them from punishment, hardens them in guilt. Tigellinus had long before taken measures to secure the protection of Vinus. When the troubles first broke out, he gained his friendship by saving his daughter, who, being then in Rome, and in Nero's power, was in danger of her life; and but lately he promised that

* *Pessimus quisque, diffidentia præsentium mutationem pavens, adversus publicum odium privatam gratiam præparat: unde nulla innocentiae cura, sed vices impunitatis.* Tac.

A. R. 819.
A. C. 68.
Inconsistency of Galba's behaviour towards the ministers of Nero's cruelties.
Tigellinus spared.
Plut. Tac. Hist. i. 72. Suet. Galb. 14.

A. R. 119. that favourite a very large sum, if he escaped
A. C. 68. all dangers by his means. Measures so well taken could not but succeed. Vinus took him under his protection, and obtained from Galba a promise of his life.

Men were astonished when they compared the fate of this miscreant with that of Petronius Turpilianus, who, without being guilty of hardly any other crime, than his fidelity to Nero, had been cruelly put to death : whilst he who had made Nero deserve worse than death, and after perverting, had, like a perfidious traitor, abandoned him, was suffered to live happy and unmolested : a convincing proof of the enormous power of Vinus, and of the indisputable certainty that money would make him do any thing.

The people were highly incensed against Tigellinus ; in the circus, theatres, and all public places, they cried out he ought to be put to death, that to see him die would be the most pleasing of sights to them. All concurred in that wish, as well those who hated Nero, as those who regretted him. Galba was so obedient to Vinus's orders, that he published an ordinance, wherein he undertook the defence of that infamous wretch, and said Tigellinus was in so bad a state of health, that he could not be expected to live long. He even taxed the people with cruelty, and took it very ill that they should strive, said he, to force him to render his government odious and tyrannical.

Vinus and Tigellinus triumphant, insulted over the people's griefs. Tigellinus offered up a sacrifice of thanks to the gods, and prepared a splendid entertainment ; and Vinus, after supping with the emperor, came with his daughter,

daughter, then a widow, to Tigellinus's desert. A. R. 819.
 Tigellinus made the lady a present of a * million ^{A. C. 68.}
 of sesterces, and ordered the sultana queen of ^{* 80000.}
 his seraglio to take off her necklace, worth six † † ^{48000.}
 hundred thousand sesterces, and tie it round
 Vinus's daughter's neck. Tigellinus did not
 long enjoy this scandalous impunity: we shall
 soon see him suffer under Otho the just punish-
 ment of his crimes.

A criminal of less importance than him might
 expect impunity from Galba. The eunuch
 Halorus, who poisoned Claudius, and had been
 one of the chief instigators of Nero's cruelties,
 not only escaped death, but had a rich and ho-
 nourable intendantscy given him. It is not said
 who was his patron and protector, but we may
 safely venture to say he could not have a bet-
 ter than his money.

Even the good actions of a prince † who is ^{Galba's}
 hated and despised, are misrepresented and ^{good ac-}
 blamed, or at least no value is set on them. ^{tions for-}
 Galba recalled such as were in exile: he suf- ^{got or}
 fered informers to be punished, and gave up ^{blamed.}
 ungrateful and insolent slaves to the vengeance ^{Tac. Hist.}
 of their masters. Such actions are surely laud- ^{II. 10.}
 able; yet they were so little remarked, that ^{Zonari,}
 neither Suetonius nor Plutarch take any notice
 of them.

Galba rewarded the Gauls who rose with ^{Tac. Hist.}
 Vindex, by remitting a fourth part of the ^{I. 8. & 81.}
 tributes they were to pay, and making them ^{Plut.}
 burghers of Rome. Though it was quite natu-
 ral for him to be grateful to those to whom he
 owed the empire, yet it was thought those fa-
 vours

† Inviso semel principe, seu bene seu male facta premunt.
Tac. Hist. I. 7.

A.R. 819. vours were purchased from Vinus, and people
 A. C. 68. took occasion from thence to complain of, and
 be dissatisfied with his master.

He makes
 the soldiers
 hate him.
Tac. Hist.
 l. 5. &
Plut.

The general disposition of people's minds was, as we see, not favourable to Galba. He compleated his ruin by setting his soldiers against him. His severity *, before esteemed and praised, was now suspected: fourteen years of licentiousness and relaxation of all military discipline under Nero's government, had taught the troops to dread the old rigour so strictly observed in the army, and to love the vices of their generals, as much as they had formerly respected their virtues. An expression of Galba, well becoming an emperor, but at that time dangerous in his mouth, changed their secret grudge into implacable hatred. They expected to receive, if not so large a sum as Nymphidius had promised, at least a gratification equal to what Nero had given them on his accession to the empire. Galba being informed of it said, "it was his custom to levy soldiers and not to buy them." They were sensible these words cut off, not only all present hopes, but even future, and would be a precedent and law to Galba's successors. They flew into a violent passion, and thought their anger so much the more just, as so haughty a stile was, as we have seen, not backed by a suitable conduct. Every thing was

* *Laudata olim et militari fama celebrata severitas ejus agebat adspernantes veterem disciplinam, et ita quatuordecim annis a Nerone adsuefactos, ut haud minus vitia principum amarent, quam olim virtutes venerabantur. Accessit Galbæ vox pro republica honesta, ipsi anceps, legi a se militem non emi. Nec enim ad hanc formam cætera erant.*
Tac. Hist. l. 5.

was ripe for a revolution in the beginning of A.R. 819, the year in which Galba entered on his second A. C. 68. consulship with T. Vinus.

SER. SULPICIUS GALBA CÆSAR AUGUSTUS II.
T. VINIUS RUFINUS.

A.R. 820.
A. C. 69.

This year is remarkable in the annals of mankind for being fraught with scenes of woe, civil wars, and such violent convulsions in every state, as shook alternately each part of the universe. Tacitus, willing to inform his readers, not only of events, but of their causes too, gives us on this occasion an account of the state of the empire just before those storms broke out, and of the dispositions of the citizens, provinces and soldiers. I have borrowed from him such particularities as suited the subject I have been treating, and shall now give the rest so far as I can, without repeating what has been already said.

Nero's death gave every one joy at first, but soon produced great diversity of sentiments. The senators persisted in a way of thinking which rooted in them a detestation to tyranny. They enjoyed all the sweets of liberty with a higher relish, as they were but just delivered from a state of dreadful servitude, and were no ways cramped by a prince but just seated on the throne, and at that time absent. The most distinguished of the knights, and the more thinking part of the people, had always adopted the maxims of the senate. But the populace, the mob, accustomed to the pleasures of the circus and theatres, the most vicious of the slaves, and debauched citizens, who, after ruin-

A year of
misfor-
tunes.

State of
the empire
at the be-
ginning of
this year.
Tac. Hist.
I. 4—11.

ing

A.R. 820. ing themselves, subsisted on Nero's shameful
 A. C. 69. prodigalities, were dissatisfied, at a loss what to do, and glad to join in any clamour that promised a change. Even Galba's age * was the sport of the multitude, who, esteeming their princes by their looks, contemptuously compared the old emperor's bald head and infirmities with Nero's sprightly youth.

I have already said how the pretorians were disposed. They abandoned Nero only because they were deceived. Several of them had entered into Nymphidius's views, and though that chief of the revolt was dead, yet their minds were soured and restless. Disappointed of the reward they had been promised, and seeing, whilst things remained in the situation they were, no probability of doing or getting much; depending, too, but little on the favour of a prince raised to empire by the legions; their fidelity was the less stable as they held Galba in contempt, nor did they scruple openly to reproach him with his age and avarice.

The pretorians were not the only troops then in Rome. Galba had brought with him his legion out of Spain: the remains of the marine legion formed by Nero, and the detachments of the German, British and Illyrian armies, by him intended to march against Vindex, were likewise there; and all together formed a very considerable military body in that city, and a great force for whoever should be able to fix their fluctuating minds.

Most

* Ipsa ætas Galbæ et irrisui et fastidio erat, assuetis juventæ Neronis, et imperatoris forma ac decore corporis, ut est mos vulgi, comparantibus. Tac.

Most of the provinces were quiet: but the A.R. 820. violent ferment that reigned in Gaul and the A. C. 69. German armies, plainly portended a dreadful storm. From the beginning of the troubles Gaul was divided into two very unequal factions. The greater number had sided with Vindex; whilst those who bordered on Germany declared themselves his enemies, and even made war against him. This division still subsisted. The old partizans of Vindex remained attached to Galba, who had heaped favours on them. The inhabitants of Treves, Langres, and parts adjacent, being excluded those favours, and even punished by forfeitures of part of their lands, added jealousy to their resentment, and were not less incensed at the advantages they saw others enjoy, than at the hardships they themselves suffered.

The two *armies in Germany, ever ready to unite, and by so doing to become very formidable, were both dissatisfied and uneasy: a disposition of mind which, in a powerful body, borders near upon rebellion. Proud of the victory they had obtained over Vindex, they thought Galba distrusted them, because they had opposed his interest. They had not been prevailed on to abandon Nero without great difficulty. They had offered the empire to Virginius, and, though piqued against that great man for refusing it, yet they could not be reconciled to the loss of him. The situation he was in at Galba's court, destitute of power, and even accused, seemed to reflect humiliation and dishonour on them, for they thought themselves

* Germanici exercitus, quod periculosissimum in tantis viribus, solliciti et irati. *Tac. Hist.* I. 8.

A. R. 620. selves accused in him. The * army on the up-
 A. C. 69. per Rhine despised its commander Hordeonius
 Flaccus, an infirm, gouty old man, incapable
 of behaving consistently, or of acting with au-
 thority: he was not fit to manage even an
 army where no dissatisfaction or uneasiness
 had been. The restless soldiers under his com-
 mand were but the more irritated by his feeble
 attempts to keep them within bounds. The
 legions on the lower Rhine had long been
 without a chief since the death of Fonteius
 Capito, till at length Galba sent them A. Vi-
 tellius, whom he purposely chose as a man of
 no consequence, and of whom he could have
 no cause to be jealous. Vitellius was in fact
 infinitely contemptible: gluttony stood first on
 the list of his vices. Galba therefore conclud-
 ed he could have nothing to apprehend from
 him: those who think so much of their bellies,
 said he, need not be feared; Vitellius will find
 enough to fill his in a fat rich province. The
 event, however, shewed Galba was mistaken.

Tac. Germany was the only province that threat-
 ened an immediate insurrection. Spain re-
 mained quiet under the peaceable government
 of Cluvius Rufus, famous for his learning,
 eloquence, and knowledge of history, but quite
 unexperienced in war. None of the legions
 were less concerned than those of Britain in the
 horrors and calamities of the civil wars: either
 because the distance they were at, and their
 being

* Superior exercitus legatum Hordeoneum Flaccum sper-
 nebat, senecta et debilitate pedum invalidum; ne quieto
 quidem milite regimen: adeo furentes infirmitate retinentis
 etiam accendebantur. Tac.

being separated by the sea from the rest of the empire, prevented the contagious spirit of sedition reaching them; or that the frequent expeditions they had to make, kept them sufficiently employed, and taught them to make a better use of their valour by employing it against the enemy. Illyria, where the legions were quartered remote from each other, intermixing neither their forces nor their vices, was, by that prudent policy, secured from all disturbances.

The East was still at peace: no symptoms then appeared of the revolution, which, at last, fixed the fate of the empire. Mucian, to whom Vespasian was afterwards * indebted for his elevation to the throne, commanded four legions in Syria. His life was a series of vicissitudes. In his youth he had powerful friends, to whom he paid his court with all the assiduity ambition could inspire. Disappointed in his views, his expences ruined him, and he was in a very distressed condition; besides which, he had the anger of Claudius to dread, so that he thought himself well off in obtaining a trifling command in Asia. There he lived some time, in a situation as near that of an exile as his future fortune was to empire.

* Syriam et quatuor legiones obtinebat Licinius Mucianus, vir secundis adversisque juxta famosus. Insignes amicitias juvenis ambitiose coluerat. Mox attritis opibus, lubrico statu, suspecta etiam Claudii iracundia, in secretum Asiæ repositus, tam prope ab exsule fuit, quam postea a Principe. Luxuria, industria, comitate, arrogantia; malis bonisque artibus mixtus. Nimiæ voluptates, quum vacaret; quoties expedierat, magnæ virtutes palam laudares; secreta male audiebant. Sed apud subjectos, apud proximos, apud collegas, variis illecebris potens: et cui expeditius fuerit tradere imperium, quam obtinere. *Tac. Hist.* i. 10.

A. R. 820. pire. His character was as chequered as his
 A. C. 69. life. He was a composition of activity for labour, of voluptuousness when unemployed, and of mildness and arrogance. When idle, pleasure was his study: when busy, no man was more indefatigably assiduous: his public behaviour commanded esteem, but his private life was not exempt from blame. Conforming himself to all he had connections with, he had the art of pleasing his inferiors, equals, and colleagues, and of making himself creatures and friends every where; in short, he was fitter to give the empire to another than to possess it himself, had he had any such views.

Vespasian was making war against the Jews with three legions. He had no thoughts of thwarting Galba, and, as I before said, had sent his son Titus to assure him of his submission. Tiberius Alexander, whom I have already had occasion to speak of more than once, by birth a Jew, and nephew to Philo, governed Egypt, and commanded the troops in that province. Since the death of Clodius Macer, Africa had submitted to the stronger power, and, little pleased with the wretched master it had been ruled by, was content with any emperor. The two Mauritania's, Rhetia, Noricum, Thrace, and all the other provinces that were governed only by intendants, followed the examples of the armies that were nearest them. Italy and the unarmed provinces could expect nothing better than to become a prey to whoever should be victorious. Such was the situation of things in every part of the empire, when Galba and Vinus, joint consuls, began

began a year, the last they saw, and almost fatal to the republic. A.R. 820. A. C. 69.

Soon after the first of January, letters were received from Pompeius Propinquus, intend-On the news of the ant of Belgia, by which the court was inform-sedition of the legions in Ger- ed, that the legions on the upper Rhine, in many, Gal- contempt of their oath of allegiance to Galba, ba adopts demanded another emperor, the choice of Piso. whom they left to the senate and Roman peo-Tac. Hist. i. 12. ple, to give their revolt some colour. This Suet. Galb. 16, 17. sedition, to which Vitellius owed his elevation Plut. Galb. to the empire, will be more particularly spoken of in its proper place.

Galba thereupon resolved no longer to defer executing the design he had before formed of adopting a successor, thinking that the best remedy he could apply to the growing evil, and that it was less his age that emboldened them to slight his authority, than the want of an heir to succeed him. He had been considering of it some months, and consulting with those he thought his friends: it was the subject that engrossed the talk of the whole town; for all men will be politicians, or at least attempt to be so. But those vague reports were of no consequence. Galba's ministers were the men who might have had most influence in such an affair; but they were always divided among themselves, even in the most trivial matters, much less could they agree in a thing of this importance.

Vinius supported Otho, who in fact seemed the most proper person that could be thought of. I have described Otho under Nero's reign, whose favourite he was for some time, but, on account of Poppæ, was afterwards removed from

A. R. 820. from court, and sent to govern Lusitania. I
 A. C. 69. have likewise said, that of all the governors of
 provinces, Otho was the first that declared for
 Galba; and that he exerted himself strenuously
 in his cause; in hopes of being adopted by him;
 for even then he had that in view. That hope
 encreased daily; the soldiers were devoted to
 him; and the old court wished for him, think-
 ing to find in him another Nero.

But Vinius's espousing Otho; set the two
 other ministers, Laco and Icelus, against him;
 though they themselves had not as yet fixed on
 any one to set up in opposition. They had taken
 care to let their master know how great an in-
 timacy there was between Vinius and Otho;
 that a marriage was intended between the lat-
 ter and the consul's daughter, who was a wi-
 dow; and that Vinius was striving to promote
 his own son-in-law in the person of Otho.
 Tacitus thinks Galba had likewise an eye to
 the public good, and that he thought the em-
 pire had been taken from Nero to no purpose;
 if it was to be left to Otho.

The choice he made seems to confirm that
 opinion: Virtue determined him in favour of
 Piso Licinianus, to whose ripe years and illustri-
 ous birth was joined so * rigid a severity of mo-
 rals, that the gay part of the world called him
 a man-hater. He was son of M. Crassus and
 Scriboniana, and had been adopted by one of
 the Piso's, but which we know not. His father
 and mother were put to death by Claudius,
 with an elder brother of his called Pompeius
 Magnus. Another of his brothers, who seems
 to

* *Æstimatione recta severus, deterius interpretantibus
 tristior habebatur. Tac.*

to have been the eldest of the family, perished A. R. 820.
 under Nero. Himself had been banished, and A. C. 69.
 probably did not return to Rome till the revolution that seated Galba on the throne. Suetonius says, that Galba was always fond of Piso, and had long before resolved to make him heir to his riches and name. Others thought, according to Tacitus, that Piso owed his adoption to Laco, who had formerly been acquainted with him at Rubellius Plautus's, but pretended not to know him, that his recommendation might not be suspected of interested views. Thus much at least is certain, that Piso's severity gave Galba as much pleasure, as it did uneasiness to the courtiers in general. The emperor holding a council, at which, besides Vinus and Laco, Marcius Celsus, consul elect, and Ducennius Geminus, præfect of the city, were present, sent for Piso, and taking him by the hand, addressed him thus:

" Were I but a private man and to adopt Galba's speech to
 " you, it would certainly be an honour to me Piso.
 " to receive into my family the descendant of Tac. Hist
 " * Pompey and of Crassus; nor would it be I. 15.
 " less glorious to you, to add to the lustre of
 " your non-nobility, that of the Sulpicii and
 " Catuli. The rank to which the will of gods
 " and men has raised me, stamps a different
 " value on my adoption. Esteem for your
 " virtue

* It was probably by his mother Scribonia, that Piso was descended from Pompey, whose names were taken by one of his brothers married to Claudius's daughter Antonia, and who was called Cn. Pompeius Magnus. The reader may see the genealogy of that family in Ryckius's notes on Tacitus, *Hist.* I. 14. & *Ann.* II. 27.

A.R. 820. " virtue, and love of my country, are the mo-
 A. C. 69. " tives that induce me to take you from re-
 " tirement, and offer you that supreme power,
 " for which the ambition of our forefathers
 " kindled up so many wars, and which I my-
 " self have obtained by dint of arms. In this
 " I follow the example of Augustus, who se-
 " cured the next immediate rank to himself,
 " first to his nephew Marcellus, next to his son-
 " in-law Agrippa, then to his grand-children,
 " and lastly, to his wife's son Tiberius. But
 " Augustus sought a successor in his own fa-
 " mily ; I seek mine in the republic. Not that
 " I am destitute of relations and friends, who
 " have been of service to me in the war. But
 " it was neither ambition, nor any private
 " views that raised me to the empire : and as
 " a proof of the rectitude of my intentions in
 " the choice I now make, I might alledge,
 " not only my own connections, to which
 " I prefer you, but likewise your's. You
 " have a brother, older than yourself. He
 " would be worthy the fortune I offer you,
 " if you was not still more worthy than him.
 " * The flights and starts of youth are over
 " at

* *Ea ætas tua, quæ cupiditates adolescentiæ jam effugerit ; ea vita, in qua nihil præteritum excusandum habeas. Fortunam adhuc tantum adversam tulisti. Secundæ res acrioribus stimulis animum explorant : quia miseriæ tolerantur, felicitate corrumpimur. Fidem, libertatem, amicitiam, præcipua humani animi bona, tu quidem eadem constantia retinebis ; sed alii per obsequium imminuent. Irrumpet adulatio, blanditiæ ; pessimum veri affectus venenum, sua cuique utilitas. Etiam ego ac tu simplicissime inter nos hodie loquimur : ceteri libentius cum fortuna nostra, quam nobiscum. Nam suadere principi quod oporteat, multi laboris : assentatio erga principem quemcunque sine affectu peragitur.*

" at your age. Your conduct has never stood A.R. 820.
 " in need of an apologist. Hitherto you have A. C. 69.
 " felt only the frowns of fortune. Prosperity
 " puts the heart to a much severer trial. Many
 " nobly persevere in resisting adversity, who
 " are seduced and overcome by the smiles of
 " prosperity. I make no doubt but that you
 " will behave with the same equal mind, be
 " faithful to your engagements, and open and
 " sincere in your friendships, in which the
 " greatest blessings of life consist. But the
 " baneful complaisance of others will attempt
 " to undermine those virtues in you. Flattery
 " and servile adulation will assail you : private
 " interest, that mortal enemy to all true at-
 " tachment, will make treacherous deceivers
 " of all that are about you. I tell you plainly
 " and sincerely what I think. Our fortune,
 " more than ourselves, is what courtiers aim
 " at : for it is thought troublesome, and often
 " dangerous, to give a prince good advice ;
 " whereas flattery has an ample field to dis-
 " play itself, without the heart's being at all
 " concerned.

" If * the vast body of the empire could be
 " kept in equilibrium, without the assistance
 " of one immediate hand to govern and di-
 " rect it, I think nobly enough of myself to
 " say, I would have the honour of restoring
 " the old republic. But the necessity of a chief
 " has

* Si immensum Imperii corpus stare ac librari sine rec-
 tore posset, dignus etiam a quo Respublica inciperet. Nunc
 eo necessitatis jampridem ventum est, ut nec mea senectas
 conferre plus populo Romano possit, quam bonum successo-
 rem ; nec tua plus juventa, quam bonum principem. Tac.

A.R. 820. " has long since been proved. The best pre-
 A.C. 69. " sent I can make the Roman people, is to
 " give them a good successor ; and you will do
 " your duty towards that people, if you govern
 " them like a good prince. Under Tiberius
 " and the succeeding emperors, we have been,
 " like the patrimony of one single family, pos-
 " sessed by right of inheritance. Election will
 " stand us in the stead of liberty : and the Ju-
 " lian and Claudian families being extinct, a-
 " doption is the proper way to find out the
 " most worthy : for, to be born of a prince, is
 " the effect of chance ; it is a circumstance
 " that excludes freedom of judgment : but in
 " adoption there is no constraint, and the pub-
 " lic voice will always direct how to make a
 " proper choice.

" Let the * fate of Nero be ever before
 " your eyes. What was the end of that
 " prince, bloated with pride because the Cæ-
 " sars were his ancestors ? Neither Vindex with
 " his unarmed province, nor I with my single
 " legion, were what ruined him. It was his
 " own debaucheries, his monstrous cruelty
 " that forced mankind to shake off his detest-
 " ed yoke, and to set an example, till then un-
 " heard of, of an emperor condemned. Even
 " we are not to flatter ourselves with too great
 " security. Though raised to this high station
 " of supreme power by success of war and
 " right of election, and though we govern with
 " the

* Sit ante oculos Nero, quam longa Cæsarum serie tu-
 mentem, non Vindex cum inermi provincia, aut ego cum
 una legione, sed sua immanitas, sua luxuria, cervicibus pub-
 licis depulere. Neque erat adhuc damnati principis exem-
 plar. Tac.

“ the strictest regard to all the laws of virtue, A. R. 820.
“ yet envy will attack us. Be not however A. C. 69.
“ dismayed, if in this general convulsion of the
“ world, you still see two legions restless and
“ discontented. I did not find matters quite
“ calm neither when I took the helm of em-
“ pire : and so soon as the people shall be in-
“ formed of this adoption, by which a succes-
“ sor is appointed and secured, my old age, the
“ only thing they now find to reproach me
“ with, will be forgot. The bad will always
“ regret Nero ; but it must be our study, that
“ none but the bad may have cause to regret
“ him.

“ Time will not permit me to lay down les-
“ sons, or expatiate on what your conduct
“ ought to be ; nor can there be occasion for
“ it, if I have made a proper choice. I shall
“ only * add in one word, that your surest and
“ shortest way to distinguish between what are
“ good and what are bad rules of conduct, is
“ to recollect what you yourself have wished
“ for and desired, and what you have con-
“ demned, in the princes you have seen : for
“ this state is not like others, where a single
“ family reigns and keeps a whole nation in
“ awe and slavery. The people you will have
“ to govern can bear neither entire liberty, nor
“ total servitude.”

So

* Utilissimus idem ac brevissimus bonarum malarumque rerum dilectus est, cogitare quid aut nolueris sub alio principe, aut volueris. Neque enim, hic, ut ceteris in gentibus, certa dominorum domus, et ceteri servi : sed imperaturus es hominibus, qui nec totam servitutem pati possunt, nec totam libertatem. Tac.

A.R. 820. So * spoke Galba, as appointing an heir to
A. C. 69. the empire. The rest already worshipped the
fortune of the new Cæsar.

Piso behaved like a man quite master of himself: no sign of emotion or immoderate joy was perceived in him from the first moment of his coming in, nor for a long time after, during which the eyes of all were attentively fixed upon him. His answer was full of respect towards his father and emperor, and of modesty in what related to himself. He seemed neither elated nor insensible, and could not but be thought more deserving the empire, than desirous of it.

Galba declares his adoption to the prætorians, whose minds he alienates by his severity.

The next consideration was, how it would be most proper to declare the adoption, whether to the people, the senate assembled, or the prætorians. It was resolved to begin with the latter, as an honourable distinction granted to the troops; and it was judged, that though it might be low and dangerous to curry favour with them, by giving money or granting them unmanly indulgences, yet all becoming methods of securing their approbation were to be used. In the † mean time a prodigious crowd was gathered about the imperial palace, curious to dive into this important secret;
and

* Et Galba quidem hæc ac talia, tanquam principem faceret; ceteri tanquam cum facto loquebantur. Pisonem fuerunt statim intuentibus, et mox coniectis in eum omnium oculis, nullum turbati aut exsultantis animi motum prodidisse. Sermo erga patrem imperatoremque reverens, de se moderatus; nihil in vultu habituque mutatum: quasi imperare posset magis quam vellet. *Tac.*

† Circumsteterat interim palatium publica expectatio magni secreti impatiens, et male coercitam famam suppressantes augebant. *Tac.*

and the more care was taken to prevent its transpiring too soon, the greater was the impatience of the multitude, and their eagerness to credit the reports that began to spread. A. R. 829.
A. C. 69.

This was on the tenth of January; and the storms of thunder, lightning and rain that fell, made it a dreadful day even for that season. The Romans had always superstitiously looked upon thunder as a bad omen for elections, and when it happened, used to break up their assemblies. Galba very justly laughed at those vulgar prejudices, and proceeded in what he was about. The event was against him, and of course confirmed the credulous in their belief.

His speech to the soldiers was not long. Being naturally given to few words, and affecting a * brevity becoming his rank, he declared his adoption of Piso, agreeable to the example of Augustus; adding, that, according to the old military † custom, he had made choice of a companion in case any extraordinary occasions should require his assistance. He likewise added a word or two concerning the sedition in Germany, for fear his silence on that head should be thought mysterious, and give room to think it more serious than it really was. He said, that the fourth and eighteenth legions, stirred up a few turbulent men, had not however proceeded farther than words, and would soon return to their duty.

Galba

* Imperatoria brevitæ. Tac.

† Examples of that custom are not uncommon in the Roman History. The reader will find it practised by the Samnites, *Hist. of the Roman Republic*, Tac. III.

A.R. 820. Galba did not qualify the laconic dryness
 A. C. 69. of his speech with any soothing expressions, any gifts of money, or promise of it: yet the officers and soldiers that were nearest his tribunal, applauded him with seeming satisfaction. The rest observed a heavy mournful silence, vexed at losing in a revolution brought about by dint of arms, the rewards they had used to be entitled to even in peace. Tacitus * is positive that a small liberality, could he have brought his rigid œconomy to grant it, would have secured Galba the affection of all. His austerity, which might have suited the old times, but did not those in which he lived, was what ruined him.

The adoption notified to the senate,

From the camp, Galba proceeded to the senate, where his harangue was neither longer nor more studied. Piso expressed himself in a modest obliging manner, and the senators† were disposed to favour him. Many of them sincerely approved of his adoption: those who disliked it applauded however, and even more warmly than the rest: but the greater number, quite indifferent, and taking no farther concern in any public affairs, than what was necessary for their own private views and interests, were ready to pay homage to any rising fortune.

Galba hurts himself more and more.

In the meantime the news from Germany encreased the terrors and apprehensions of the whole

* Constat potuisse conciliari animos quantulacumque parci senis liberalitate. Nocuit antiquus rigor & nimia severitas, cui jam pares non sumus. *Tac.*

† Et patrum favor aderat: multi voluntate: effusius qui noluerant; medii ac plurimi, obvio obsequio, privatas speꝝ agitantes, sine publica cura. *Tac.*

whole city. The danger seemed great, and in fact it was. The senate was for sending a deputation of some of its members to appease the sedition. In the prince's council it was proposed to send Piso at the head of that deputation, that the name of Cæsar, added to the authority of that first body of the state, might strike an awe on the mutineers. Some proposed sending the prætorian prefect with Piso; and that was what quite disconcerted the plan, Laco not thinking it adviseable for him to run the hazard of such a commission. Even the senate's deputation did not take place. Galba, to whom the choice of deputies was left, named them, then admitted the excuses of several, and appointed new ones in their stead. Some were willing to go, whilst others declined it, according as they were influenced by hope or fear. From all those changes and variations resulted such a neglect and want of dignity and decency, as made the old emperor appear more contemptible than ever.

At the same time two tribunes of the prætorian cohorts were broke, with one belonging to those in the city, and another of the patrole or watch. The thing intended was, to make such examples of some, as should intimidate others who remained in place: but instead of having that effect, it served only to incense them more. They concluded they were all suspected, and that it was intended to destroy them one after another.

This disposition of theirs was extremely favourable to the ambitious views of Otho, who, enraged to see his hopes frustrated, had no other

Otho's
wicked de-
signs.

A.R. 820. other thoughts than how he might bring about
 A. C. 69. by guilt, what he had not been able to effect by
Tac. Hist. art. His bad conduct had reduced him to a *
 I. 21. necessity either of perishing or being emperor.
Plut. Galb. He made no secret of it, but owned his debts,
Suet. Oth. which amounted to two † hundred millions of
 4. sesterces, were so great, that it was indifferent
 to him whether he fell in battle by the enemy's
 sword, or by the prosecutions of his creditors,
 and the sentence of the judge. Living in such
 luxury ‡ as must have ruined an emperor, and
 reduced to greater indigence than even the
 lowest private man could have borne, hating
 and detesting Galba, and envying Piso, he
 forged new fears and dangers, still more to
 heighten his desires. He would say to him-
 self: "He had been a burden to Nero: that,
 "to wait for a new exile under an honourable
 "name, was now out of the question. That
 "princes never fail to suspect and hate the
 "man whom public opinion destines to be
 "their successor; that that idea had already
 "hurt him in the opinion of an almost decrepid
 "emperor: what effect then must it have on
 "a young prince naturally rigid and morose,
 "and soured by a long exile? That he could
 "expect nothing less than death, and conse-
 "quently ought to stick at nothing at a time
 "when Galba was tottering, and Piso not
 "yet settled. That a change of government

is

* *Neque dissimulabat nisi Principum, se stare non posse: nihilque referre, ab hoste in acie, an in foro sub creditoribus caderet.* Suet.

‡ *Othonem . . . multa exstimulabant: luxuria etiam principum onerosa, inopia vix privato toleranda; in Galbam ira, in Pisonem invidia Fingebat et metum, quo magis concupisceret.* Tac.

† Sixteen
 hundred
 thousand
 pounds.

“ is a favourable moment for great enterprises ; A.R.820.
 “ and that circumspection is out of season A. C. 69.
 “ where repose is more dangerous than teme-
 “ rity. In short, that since by the common
 “ law of nature all must die, the only diffe-
 “ rence is, either to be buried in oblivion, or
 “ gloriously recorded to posterity : and that if
 “ his fate was to be the same, whether inno-
 “ cent or guilty, a man of spirit ought rather
 “ to seek that fate, than coward like, to wait
 “ its coming.”

These sentiments * were backed in Otho by a firm and resolute courage, no ways resembling the effeminacy of his manners ; and all that were about him spurred him on. His freemen and slaves, accustomed to live as voluptuously as their master, was ever reminding him of the pleasures of Nero's court, the luxury and licentiousness that reigned there, and the advantages that supreme power affords to gratify the passions ; adding, that he might hope to enjoy them all if he did but dare ; and that it was low and unworthy him to leave the possession of them to others. Such exhortations were quite agreeable to his taste ; and his pleasing expectations were confirmed by astrologers †, a set of men, says Tacitus, whose trade it is to deceive the great, to feed their false hopes, and who, though condemned by all laws, yet

* Non erat Othoni mollis & corpori similis animus. Et intimi libertorum servorumque, corruptius quam in privata domo habili, aulam Neronis, & luxus, adulteria, matrimonia, ceterasque regnorum libidines, avido talium, si auderet, ut sua ostentantes, quiescenti ut aliena exprobrabant. Tac.

† Genus hominum potentibus infidum, sperantibus fallax, quod in civitate nostra & vetabitur semper & retinebitur. Tac.

A. R. 820. yet are always retained in the service of cupi-
A. C. 69. dity.

Otho had long before began to consult them. He had that weakness in common with Poppæa, who had several in constant pay, and secretly confided in those impostors, so * dangerous to be near an empress. One of them called Ptolemy, had foretold Otho, when he set out for Spain, that he would survive Nero. That prediction proving true, Otho conceived a great opinion of the astrologer; and Ptolemy growing bolder, ventured a second prophecy, whereby he promised him the empire after Galba. The circumstances of things and public report, might give him room to form that guess with some probability. But Otho †, as is natural to weak minds, apt to credit whatever is extraordinary and most obscure, was thoroughly satisfied of his fortune-teller's great skill, and made no doubt but that this oracle was dictated by his profound penetration into futurity. After Piso's adoption, Ptolemy ‡, unwilling to be thought a false prophet, resolved, since things did not come round of themselves, to help them, and advised sticking at no crime: a natural consequence of such expectations and desires as Otho had conceived and flattered himself with.

It is however uncertain, whether the design of conspiring against Galba's life should be dated

* *Pessimum principalis matrimonii instrumentum. Tac.*

† *Cupidine ingenii humani libentius obscura * credendi. Tac.*

‡ *Ne durat Ptolomæus, jam & sceleris instinator, ad quod facillime ab ejus modi voto transitur. Tac.*

* The text says *credi*, but commentators are of opinion it should be *credendi*.

dated from this time only, or whether it was A. R. 820. formed before; for Otho had long studied to A. C. 69 gain the affection of the army. It is most likely that wanting to be emperor at any rate, he would rather have chosen to ascend the throne by licit means; but that, rather than fail, he was determined to make use of any other. He would take particular notice of the old soldiers, calling them by their names, and saying they were all his comrades, for that they had served together under Nero: he enquired after those he did not see; helped such as were in distress; gave them money, saying how much he pitied them, and dropped ambiguous expressions concerning Galba, with whatever else was most proper to make impression on such people; and dispose them to mutiny.

In that manner did he practise on the troops himself, whilst his second, one Mævius Pudeus, an intimate of Tigellinus's, was not idle. He was charged with the detail; and knowing which were the most turbulent, which the most fickle characters, and which were most in want of money, he took care to bring them together, and secretly made them presents; till at last he was audacious enough, every time the emperor supped at Otho's house, to give every man on guard there a * hundred ^{Sixteen} sesterces, pretending it was done out of regard ^{shilling.} to Galba, whom it was in fact calculated to ruin. We may readily conclude he acted by Otho's order, and in his name; and he himself was so little cautious to conceal his seditious steps, that a soldier having a dispute with his neighbours about the limits of a field, Otho bought the whole adjoining field, and made a present

A. R. 820. present of it to the soldier. The præfect La-
A. C. 69. co, stupidly negligent, saw nothing of what was
 going forward ; he was equally ignorant both
 of what what was privately done, and what was
 publicly talked of.

His last
 steps to in-
 vade the
 empire.

Otho having resolved to throw off the mask
 and attack Galba, charged Onomastus, one of
 his freemen, with the conduct of the crime.
 It is incredible to think how weak the means
 were that he made use of in an enterprise of
 such importance. A million of sesterces, that
 is to say, about eight thousand pounds of our
 money, which he had lately received from one
 of the emperor's slaves, for an employment he
 had procured him, was his whole treasure :
 and Onomestus bribed by presents and pro-
 mises, Barbius Proculus and Veturius, two *
 serjeants of the guards, cunning enterprising
 fellows, and who had a knack of managing the
 minds of the lower class. Two soldiers †, says
 Tacitus with astonishment, undertook to de-
 throne an emperor and make another, and suc-
 ceeded.

It is true they had only to set fire to a train
 ready laid. Among the prætorians still re-
 mained some creatures of Nymphidius's : others
 regretted Nero, and the licentiousness in which
 they had lived under that emperor : and all
 were incensed at having received no gratifica-
 tion from Galba, and afraid of being reduced
 from prætorian cohorts to legions, whose ser-
 vice

* So I render the titles of *Optio & Tesserarius*, to which
 we have nothing exactly corresponding in our troops.

† *Suscepere duo manipulares imperium populi Romani
 transferendum, & transtulerunt. Tac. Hist. i. 26.*

vice was much harder and less profitable. Bar-A. R. 820. bius and Veturius however communicated their A. C. 69. plan only to a few of the most resolute, sowing amongst the rest such seeds of sedition, as would be ready to shoot up at a moment's warning.

I have already observed, that besides the prætorians, there were at that time in Rome, legions and detachments of legions, brought thither from different provinces on account of the late disturbances. They too caught the infection, imitating the example of their seditious comrades in Germany: and matters were so easily and expeditiously prepared, that the day after the ides, which was the 14th of January, the conspirators would have taken Otho as he was returning home from supper, and proclaimed him emperor, had they not feared the accidents that might happen in the dark, or from the drunkenness of most of those who were to be employed, and the difficulty of collecting together the soldiers of the several armies, dispersed over all the city. The tumult would undoubtedly have been great: but that was not the consideration that withheld villains, ready to murder their prince in cold blood. They were afraid the legionary soldiers, but lately come from the provinces, not knowing Otho personally, might mistake some other for him. The execution of their plot was therefore deferred to the next.

It was not possible for all this to be carried on so privately but that something must transpire. Galba was informed of it, but Laco prevented his minding what was said. That prefect was a blundering obstinate man;
not

A. R. 820. not * in the least acquainted with the temper
 A. C. 69. of the soldiers, and always ready to contradict
 every sentiment but his own, though never so
 just and proper.

The fifteenth of January, the day fixed upon
 for the execution of the plot, Otho, according
 to custom, waited on the emperor and was re-
 ceived as usual; after which he attended Galba
 to offer up a sacrifice, and with great joy heard
 the priest who consulted the entrails of the
 victims, declare, he found signs of the anger of
 the gods, and of imminent danger from a do-
 mestic enemy.

Execution
 of the con-
 spiracy.

At that instant his freemen Onomastus came
 to tell him that the architect and masons wait-
 ed for him. That was the signal agreed on to
 signify that the conspirators were ready, and
 that the soldiers began to assemble. Otho with-
 drew, and being asked why he went, answered,
 that he was about purchasing an old house, but
 wanted first to have it examined. Leaning on
 his freeman's arm, he reached the military pil-
 lar in the Forum, where he found three and
 twenty soldiers, who saluted him emperor. Ter-
 rified at their small number, he was for return-
 ing back, if we may credit Plutarch, and re-
 nouncing an enterprise that seemed too boldly
 concerted: but the soldiers would not let him.
 Putting him immediately into a chair, they
 carried him to the camp, holding their drawn
 swords in their hands. On the road they were
 met by as many more soldiers; some of them
 already informed of what was doing, but most
 led

* Ignarus militarium animorum, consilique quamvis
 egregii, quod non ipse afferret, inimicus, & adversus peri-
 tos pervicax. Tac.

led thither by curiosity and surprize: they ^{A. R. 820.} accompanied Otho, some drawing their swords ^{A. C. 69.} and making a great noise, whilst others were silent, waiting the event before they would declare themselves. The tribune, who guarded the camp gate, either disconcerted by the novelty of so strange an event, or apprehending the contagion might have reached within the camp, and that it would be equally dangerous and useless to attempt opposition, let them pass without resistance: and the other officers following his example, preferred present safety to honour attended with danger: so that * this horrid deed was undertaken by only a handful of villains; though wished for by more, and tolerated by all.

Galba † was still busied with his sacrifice, ^{Galba is informed of it.} and, as Tacitus says, teasing the gods, already declared in favour of his rival. A report was spread, that a senator, whose name none could at first tell, was carrying to the prætorian camp: Otho, was soon known to be the man. At the same time, those who had met the rebel troops, running back to the city, some of them increased the terror by magnifying objects, whilst others made slight of it, not forgetting to flatter, even in that critical moment. A council was held, in which it was resolved to sound the dispositions of the cohort then on guard. Piso was ordered to do it: Galba being reserved as a last resource, in case the evil required stronger remedies. The new Cæsar, assembled

* *Isque habitus animorum fuit, ut passimum facinus audent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur. Tac.*

† *Ignarus interim Galba, & sacris intentus, fatigabat alieni jam imperii deos. Tac.*

A.R. 820. assembled the cohort before the gates of the
A. C. 69. imperial palace, and addressed them thus from
a balcony.

Piso's
speech to
the cohort
on guard
before the
palace.

" This * is the sixth day, my brave fellow
soldiers, since, without knowing what the
event might be, nor whether I ought to
wish or fear a title, which raises me next to
empire, I have been named Cæsar. The
success is in your hands: on you depends
the fate of our family, and of the republic.
Do not, however, imagine I fear for myself
personally; any fatal consequence. I have
been long accustomed to adversity, and now
find, that the highest fortune is not the least
exposed to danger. But I lament the fate
of my father, the senate, and the empire, if
we must perish to day; or, which must be
equally grievous to such as are friends to
virtue, purchase our safety at the expence of
blood. It was no small comfort to us, in the
last revolution, to find it accomplished with-
out the death of any. My adoption seemed
to guard against all apprehensions of a civil
war, even after Galba. An audacious man
dares to frustrate those pleasing hopes.
" I will not boast either my birth or life.
" Virtues need not be mentioned where Otho
is

* Sextus dies agitur, commilitones, ex quo ignarus futuri,
& sive optandum hoc nomen, sive timendum erat, Cæsar ad-
scitus sum: quo domus nostræ aut reipublicæ fato, in vestra
manu positum est. Non quia meo nomine tristiores casum
paveam, ut qui adversa expertus, quum maxime discam ne
secunda quidem minus discriminis habere. Patris & sena-
tus, & ipsius imperii vicem doleo, si nobis aut perire hodie
necesse est, aut, quod æque apud bonos miserum est, occi-
dere. *Tac.*

“ is concerned. His vices, for which only he A. R. 820.
 “ is famous, ruined the empire, when he was A. C. 69.
 “ but the emperor’s favourite. Is it for his
 “ indolence, his languishing air, and effeminate
 “ dress, that he is thought worthy of the
 “ throne? those * who take his luxury for li-
 “ berality are mistaken. He will know how to
 “ dissipate, but not how to give. What are
 “ his thoughts now taken up with, but parties
 “ of debauch, adultery, and women void of
 “ honour? Those are what he thinks the pre-
 “ rogatives of supreme power : the shame and
 “ ignominy of the empire is his pleasure. How
 “ † should he think otherwise? He that attains
 “ sovereignty by crimes and guilt, will never
 “ be governed by the maxims of virtue.

“ The power of the Cæsars was given Galba
 “ by the unanimous consent of all mankind :
 “ and, with your approbation, Galba has ap-
 “ pointed me to succeed him. If the republic,
 “ senate and people, be no longer but empty
 “ names, at least it is your interest, my dear
 “ comrades, not to let the very worst of sol-
 “ diers give you emperors. The legions have
 “ been known to rebel against their chiefs.
 “ But hitherto the fidelity of the prætorian co-
 “ hort has been inviolable. Even Nero was
 “ not abandoned by you : it was he himself
 “ that forsook you. What ! shall less than thir-
 “ ty vagabonds, who would not be permitted
 “ to chuse even a centurion or a tribune, be

2

suffered

* Falluntur quibus luxuria specie liberalitatis imponit.
 Perdere iste sciet, donare nesciet. *Tac.*

† Nemo unquam imperium flagitio quæsitum bonis artibus
 retinuit. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. "suffered to dispose of the empire? Would you,
 A. C. 69. "by your inaction, give a sanction to them?
 "Would you be abettors of their crimes, and
 "partakers of their shame? their daring licen-
 "tiousness will reach the provinces: we shall
 "be the first victims of it, and the scourge of
 "the wars that must ensue, will light on you.
 "After all, what you are to have for murder-
 "ing your prince, is no more than you may
 "acquire with innocence: you shall receive
 "from us as a reward for your fidelity, as much
 "as is offered you to commit so detestable a
 "crime."

Galba tries
 the sol-
 diers.

Suet. Galb.
 20.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 31.

Piso's speech had its effect. The soldiers he harangued were not prejudiced by any impression contrary to their duty; and, accustomed to revere the orders of the Cæsars, they drew up in arms, and displayed their standards. But their fidelity, as we shall see, was very slender. Marius Celsus, known to the legions of Illyria, in which he had formerly had a command, was sent towards the detachment of that army, then encamped in Agrippa's portico. In another quarter were some companies of veterans of the German legions, whom Nero had sent to Alexandria, and suddenly recalled. They were sent for by two first captains of legions: and though their fellow soldiers had already proclaimed Vitellius emperor, yet they shewed more fidelity and attachment to Galba, than any other body of troops, out of gratitude for his kindness towards them, and the care he had taken to procure them proper refreshments after the fatigue of a long voyage.

They excepted, all the military people in Rome sided with Otho. The legions of mar-
 rines

A. R. 820. "cils are strengthened by reflection. After
 A. C. 69. "all, if it be proper for you to shew yourself,
 "you will still be at liberty to do it; if you
 "go out, it may not be in your power to
 "return."

Others thought it was best to make haste, before a growing conspiracy should acquire additional strength. "By our activity, said they, we shall disconcert Otho, whose sly and precipitate steps speak his weakness.— He slunk away by stealth, presented himself to a multitude that knew nothing of him, and is taking advantage of the delay our indolence grants him, to learn to act the emperor. Is it proper to wait till, having united and confirmed the whole camp in his favour, he takes possession of the Forum by force of arms, and shews you Cæsar in the capitol? whilst you, courageous emperor, with your brave friends shall lock and bolt yourself up, with a view undoubtedly to sustain a siege? your slaves will be of great service indeed, if the zeal and ardour the people now shew for you, if this first spurt of their indignation, which always is the hottest, be suffered to cool. The * least honourable is therefore the least safe resolution. If we must perish, let us brave the danger: at least Otho will be more hated, and we more esteemed for it."

Vinius strongly opposing that advice, Laco was so furious as to menace him. A deadly hatred subsisted between them, which the free-man

* Proinde intuta quæ indecora: vel si cadere necesse sit, occurrendum discrimini. Id Othoni invidiosius, & ipsis honestum. Tac.

man Icelus took care to encrease; and they ^{A. R. 820.} obstinately * persisted in sacrificing the public ^{A. C. 69.} good to their personal enmities. Galba, who wanted neither courage nor dignity of sentiments, was not long before he determined in favour of the nobler means: only it was thought a proper precaution to send Piso beforehand to the prætorian camp, to prepare matters for the emperor's reception. They were of opinion, that the great name of that young prince, the recent splendour of his adoption, and the idea the public had of his hatred to Vinus, universally detested, would render him agreeable to the soldiers.

Piso had hardly left the palace, when a report was spread, that Otho had just been killed in the camp. At † first it was only a vague rumour: but soon, as generally happens in all lies of importance, several attested the fact, assuring they were present and had seen it. The vulgar believed it; some because they wished it might be so, and others, because they did not think it worth their while to examine further. Many were of opinion, that those reports were not spread without design, but that they were set on foot by Otho's private emissaries, who, mixing with the crowd, gave them out with an intent to draw Galba from the palace.

The ‡ credulity, not only of the people, but of a great number of senators and Roman knights

* Privati odii pertinacia in publicum exitium. Tac.

† Vagus primum & incertus rumor: mox, ut in magnis mendaciis, inter fuisse sequidam et vidisse affirmabant: credula fama, ut inter gaudentes, & incuriosos. Tac.

‡ Tum vero non populus tantum & imperita plebs in plausus & immodica studia, sed equitum plerique ac senatorum;

A.R. 820. Knights seconded the views of Galba's enemies.
 A. C. 69. Free from fear, and thinking themselves no longer under a necessity of keeping any measures, each vied with the other, who should express most joy. The barriers of the palace were forced, they ran into the apartments, all wanted to shew themselves to Galba, lamenting their having been robbed by the soldiers, of the honour of revenging him. The most noisy were, as generally happens, the greatest cowards, and most disposed, as the event proved, to fly from even the appearance of danger: proud and haughty in words, and brave in talk, none of them was, nor could be certain of the fact, though they all assured it: so that Galba, deceived by the universal error, put on his armour, and got into his litter. At that instant, a soldier, called Julius Atticus, met him, and shewing his bloody sword, boasted he had killed Otho. "Friend, said Galba to him, who ordered thee?" An * expression well becoming a prince who wanted to keep the soldiers within due bounds. Threats could not dismay, nor flattery enervate him.

Fine answer of Galba's to a soldier who boasted he had killed Otho.

Ardour of the soldiers for Otho.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 36.

The situation of things was in fact very different from what he imagined. The whole camp acknowledged Otho, and such was the ardour of the soldiers, that not satisfied with forming

natorum, posito metu incauti, refractis palatii foribus, ruere iatus, ac se Galbæ ostentare, preceptam sibi ultionem querentes: ignavissimus quisque, & in periculo non ausurus, nimii verbis, linguæ feroces: nemo scire, & omnes affirmare. Donec inopia veri & consensu errantium victus, sumpto thorace Galba . . . sella levaretur. *Tac.*

* Insigni animo ad coercendum militarem licentiam, minantibus intrepidus, adversus blandientes incorruptus. *Tac.*

forming a rampart about him with their bodies, A.R. 320.
 the prætorians placed him in the midst of their A. C. 69.
 standards, on an eminence where but just before, was seen a golden statue of Galba. Neither tribune nor centurion was suffered to approach; even the soldiers warned him to guard against their officers. The air was rent with shouts of joy and mutual exhortations, far unlike the empty cries of impotent flattery uttered by the city mob. As fast as any soldier came in, the others took him by the hand, held their arms over him, carried him to Otho, and dictated the oath he was to take, sometimes recommending the soldiers to the emperor, and sometimes the emperor to the soldiers. Otho on * his side acted his part perfectly well; saluting some with his hand, holding it out to others to kiss, expressing by signs his regard for, and submission to the multitude; and doing every low trick that he thought could please. But † above all he took care to promise great matters, repeating it over and over, that he desired nothing more for himself than what the troops should please to give him.

So soon as he knew the legion of marines He harangued them.
 had declared in his favour, he began to confide in his own strength: and, having till then acted only as a seducer, who wants to make himself creatures, he now thought it time to proceed as head of a party, and one who had
 a num-

* Non deerat Otho protendens manus, adorare vulgum, jacere oscula, & omnia, serviliter pro dominatione. *Tac.*

† Nihil magis pro concione testatus est, quam id demum se habiturum quod sibi illi reliquissent. *Suet. Oth. 6.*

A.R. 820. a numerous and powerful body under his com-
A.C. 69. mand. He assembled the soldiers, and harangued them as follows. " I know not, fellow
" soldiers, on what footing I ought now to address you. I am not at liberty to speak to
" you as a private man, since you have made me
" emperor; nor as an emperor whilst another
" enjoys the empire. It is uncertain too, what
" title should be given you, whilst it remains
" a doubt, whether it be an emperor or an
" enemy to the Roman people that is harboured
" in your camp. Do you hear the cries
" by which my death and your punishment are
" demanded? so sure it is that your fate and
" mine are inseparably united, and that we
" must either perish or triumph together. Even
" Galba, mild and clement as he is, has perhaps
" already granted what has been requested.
" None can be surprized at it, after having
" seen so many innocent thousands massacred
" by his orders, though no body desired it. I
" shudder with horror whenever I recollect
" Galba's fatal entry, and the inhuman
" barbarity with which he decimated at the
" city gates, the unhappy soldiers who trusted
" to his mercy; the only exploit by which he
" has signalized himself. For what other merit
" has he brought with him to the throne,
" but the murders of Fonteius Capito in Germany,
" of Macer in Africa, of Cingonius Varro on the
" road, of Petronius Turpilianus in Rome, and
" of Nymphidius in your camp? Where is the
" province, where the army in which he has not
" violently shed innocent blood, or which, as he
" calls it, he has not
" purged

“ purged and reformed? What is a * crime in A. R. 820.
 “ others, he calls a remedy: cruelty in him is A. C. 69.
 “ wholesome severity, avarice good economy,
 “ the punishments and insults he makes you
 “ suffer, maintaining of discipline.

“ Nero has been dead but seven months,
 “ and Icelus had already plundered more than
 “ ever Vatinius, Polycletes, and Helius ever
 “ did. Vinius † would not have dared to give
 “ so great a loose to his licentiousness and avi-
 “ dity, even if he had himself been emperor,
 “ as he has done whilst only minister: He has
 “ vexed and harrassed us like people over
 “ whom he could rule, without thinking of
 “ sparing us because we belonged to another.
 “ The house of that man is alone sufficient to
 “ pay you the gratification you never yet re-
 “ ceived, though you are continually reproach-
 “ ed with it. And ‡ to cut off all hopes of your
 “ ever having it, even from his successor,
 “ Galba singles out a chosen exile, as the per-
 “ son, who, of all men is most like himself
 “ for moroseness and avarice. You saw, my
 “ dear companions, in what manner the gods
 “ declared by a violent storm their dislike of
 “ this ill-fated adoption. The senate and Ro-
 “ man people think the same. Your valour
 “ is expected to give the signal; you are the
 “ soul

* Nam quæ alii scelera, hic remedia vocat: datus falsis nominibus severitatem pro savitia, parcimoniam pro avaritia, supplicia & contumelias vestras disciplinam appellat. Tac.

† Minore avaritia aut licentia grassatus esset Vinius, si ipse imperasset. Nunc & subjectos nos habuit tamquam suos, & viles tamquam alienos. Tac.

‡ At nequa saltem in successore Galbæ spes esset, accessit ab exilio quem tristitia & avaritia sui simillimum judicebat. Tac.

A. R. 820. "soul of all great and noble enterprizes, which,
 A. C. 69. "without your assistance, could never be
 "brought to bear. It is not that war is in the
 "case, nor that any danger can threaten you.
 "The arms of all the troops in Rome are join-
 "ed to yours. One only cohort, and that but
 "* half armed, serves Galba, less as a defence
 "than as a guard that keeps him for us. The
 "moment those soldiers see you, the moment
 "I order them, no other conflict will remain,
 "but to try who shall shew the greatest zeal.
 "But let us hasten: all † delays are hurtful to
 "an enterprize, best praised when crowned
 "with success."

After this speech, Otho ordered the arsenal to be thrown open, and all took the first arms they found, without distinction of prætorian or legionary, national or foreign troops. No ‡ tribune, no centurion was seen, but every man was his own officer, and commander; animated by the grief of the good, a powerful incentive to the bad.

Galba is
 massacred
 in the Fo-
 rum by O-
 tho's party.

Things were in this situation when Piso, sent as I have said by Galba, drew near the prætorian camp. The shouts and tumultuous noise he heard, obliged him to return back, and he met Galba going towards the Forum.

At

* The Roman soldiers were never completely armed but for battle. When on guard they had only a sword and lance, and their dress was the toga, as Tacitus expressly says in this place, *una cohors togata*. Even in camp they had not their full armour, as appears by Otho's order after his speech to open the arsenal for the soldiers to arm themselves.

† Nullus cunctationi locus est in eo concilio quod non potest laudari nisi peractum.

‡ Nullo tribunorum centurionumve adhortante, sibi quisque dux & instigator, & præcipuum pessimorum incitamentum, quod boni mirebantur. *Tac.*

At the same time Marius Celsus brought bad tidings of the Illyrian soldiers. Galba was extremely perplexed. Some were for having him return to the palace; others advised his securing the capitol; and many were of opinion he had best mount the tribunal for harangues. The greater number was content to refuse whatever was proposed: and, * which is always the case, where unsuccessful counsels are given, things past were called to mind and talked of, and what it was now too late to put in execution was thought the best step that could have been taken.

The mob † that filled the Forum bore Galba from one side to the other, without his being able to resist their torrent. The temples, basilics, and other places were full, and sorrow was painted in every countenance. Not a shout, nor hardly a whisper from that vast multitude, attentively waiting what would be the event: a melancholy silence, offspring of fear and despair, reigned throughout the whole.

News was brought Otho that the people were taking arms; on which he ordered those about him to run instantly and prevent the danger. Thus, ‡ says Tacitus, did the Roman

* Quum——ut evenit in consiliis infelicibus, optima videntur quorum tempus effugerat. *Tac.*

† Agebatur huc illuc Galba turba fluctuantis impulsur, completis undique basilicis & templis, lugubri prospectu. Neque populi aut plebis ulla vox, sed attoniti vultus, & converse ad omnia aures, neque tumultus neque quies, quale magni metus & magnæ iræ silentium est.

‡ Igitur milites Romani quasi Vologesen aut Pacorum avito Arsacidarum solio depulsuri, ac non imperatorem suum inermem & senem trucidare pergerent, disjecta plebe, proculcato

A. R. 820. man soldiers, as if they had been to dethrone
 A. C. 69. Vologeses, or Pacorus, or the whole race of
 the Arsacidæ, and not massacre their weak,
 unarmed and venerable emperor, disperse the
 mob, tread the senate under foot, rush sword
 in hand into the Forum : and neither the sight
 of the capitol, nor respect for the temples that
 surrounded them, nor the majesty of empire,
 were able to awe them, nor prevent their com-
 mitting a crime, they were sure to suffer for,
 under whoever should succeed the murdered
 prince.

The moment that armed troop appeared,
 the ensign of the cohort that was with Galba,
 tore off that prince's image from his standard,
 and threw it on the ground. His insolence
 was a signal to the soldiers who all declared in
 favour of Otho ; the Forum was cleared in an
 instant by the flight of all the people, or if any
 still hesitated, the seditious, sword in hand
 soon brought them to. Thus was Galba aban-
 doned by all : and the veterans detached from
 the German armies, who alone were well dis-
 posed, and were marching to his assistance,
 arrived too late, because, not knowing the
 streets, they had taken a round-about way.
 Those that carried Galba, frighted out of their
 senses, overturned his litter, and threw him
 on the ground, near a part of the Forum call-
 ed the lake † Curtius. His last words have
 been

Suet. Galb.
c. 20.

*culcato senatu, truces armis, rapidis equis forum irrumpunt.
 Nec illos capitolii adspectus, & imminentium templorum re-
 ligio, & priores & futuri principes terruere, quo minus fas-
 cerent scelus cujus ultor est quisquis successit. Tac.*

* For the origin of this name see *M. Rollin's Rom. Hist. T. III. p. 53.*

been differently told, according as those who have recorded them, liked or disliked him. A.R. 820.
A. C. 69. Some say, he asked in an humble manner what crime he had committed, and promised to satisfy the soldiers, if they would but grant him a few days delay. Others, in greater number, assure us, that he boldly presented his throat to the murderers, exhorting them to strike if they thought the good of the state required it. But whatever he might say, could have little weight with such wretches. Their barbarity was so great that, after stabbing him in the throat and killing him, after even cutting off his head, they hacked and mangled his arms and thighs, the rest of the body being covered by his cuirass. The soldier, who cut off his head, at first wrapt it up in his cloaths, there being no hair at all to hold it by; till, exhorted by his comrades, to shew the trophy of their guilty exploit, he thrust his fingers into the mouth, and so held it up in the air, till a pike was given him, on which he stuck it.

Vinius could not escape death. It was but a few moments since the præfect Laco, either out of policy or hatred, was going to kill him without telling Galba, but did not find a convenient opportunity. He was no sooner out of that danger, with which perhaps he never was acquainted, then he fell into the hands of Otho's partizans. The circumstances of his death, are likewise variously told. Some say he was so terrified that he could not utter a word; others, that he cried out, Otho did not mean his death: which was thought a proof of intelligence between him, and his master's enemy and murderer. Tacitus has so bad an Death of
Vinius.
Tac. Hist.
I. 39, 42. opinion.

A. R. 820. opinion of him, that * he is inclined to think
 A. C. 69. him an accomplice in the conspiracy, of which he was the cause, and his crimes the pretence. However that may be, Vinius was first wounded in the knee in his flight, after which a soldier belonging to the legions, ran him through the sides with his lance.

Death of
 Piso.

No body had attempted to assist either Galba or Vinius. But Piso found a defender in the person of Sempronius Densus captain of his guards. That generous officer, the † only one worthy the name of Roman, whom, the sun, to make use of Plutarch's expression, saw in that day of guilt and horror, drawing his dagger, went up to the assassins, and, upbraiding them with their perfidy, turned their efforts against himself, by the blows and opprobrious language he gave them; and, at the expence of his own life, procured Piso, who was wounded, means to take shelter in the temple of Vesta. One of the public slaves received him there; and, moved with compassion, concealed him in his little room; where Piso, protected, not by the sanctity of the asylum, but because the place of his concealment was unknown, prolonged life for a few moments: but was soon found by two soldiers, expressly ordered to kill him, who dragged him out, and butchered him at the door of the temple.

The heads of the three victims of his ambition were carried to Otho, who examined them

* Huc potius ejus vita famaue inclinât, ut conscius sceleris fuit, cujus causa erat. Tac.

† Ο' μόνος ἥλιος ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἐν μυριᾷσι τοσαύταις ἀξίον τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἡγέμευσης. Plut. Galb.

them attentively. But * above all he could not cease looking eagerly on Piso's. Whether it be that, then freed from all apprehensions, his mind was sufficiently easy to taste joy and satisfaction ; or that, still respecting the imperial majesty in Galba, and remembering how intimate he had been with Vinus, the sight of them touched his conscience, hardened as it was in guilt : whereas he saw in Piso only an enemy and a rival, from whom he could without scruple relish the pleasure of being delivered.

A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.
The heads
of Galba,
Piso, and
Vinus carried to Otho, and stuck each of them on a pike.

Every sentiment of humanity was extinct.—The three heads, stuck on pikes, were ostentatiously borne, among the standards near the eagle ; and those who pretended, either truly or falsely, to have had a share in those horrid executions, gloried in it, and shewed their bloody hands. After Otho's death upwards † of a hundred and twenty petitions were found among his papers, claiming rewards for signal services done that fatal day. Vitellius made strict search after all whose names they bore, and put them to death, not out of regard to Galba, but in consequence of the standing maxim of princes, who are willing by such examples to secure

* Nullam cædam Otho majore lætitia exceperisse, nullum caput tam insatiabilibus oculis perlustrasse dicitur : seu tum primum levata omni sollicitudine mens, vacare gaudio cepit : seu recordatio majestatis in Galba ; amicitie in T. Vinio, quamvis immitum animum imagine tristi confuderat : Pisonis, ut inimici & æmuli, cæde lætari, jus fasque credebat.

† Plures quam CXX libellos præmia exposcentium, ob aliquum notabilem illa die operam. Vitellius postea invenit omnesque conquiri & interfici jussit, non honore Galbæ, sed tradito principibus more, munimentum ad presens in posterum ultionem.

A.R. 820. secure their own safety, or at least to revenge
A. C. 69. the injury done to majesty.

Laco and
Icelus put
to death.
Tac. Hist.
I. 46.

Otho took care not to let the præfect Laco, nor Icelus, escape with impunity. Under pretence of banishing the first to an island, he had him killed in his way thither. Less precaution was necessary with Icelus, who being but a freeman, was executed publicly.

Otho permits those
he had put
to death to
be buried.

Otho's cruelty towards those whom his ambition had made his enemies, did not however extend beyond their death. He suffered Verania, Piso's wife, to pay the last duties to her husband; and Crispina, Vinus's daughter, to do the same for her father. They each of them purchased from the soldiers, still more covetous than cruel, the heads of persons so dear to them, and joined them to their bodies.

Piso was but thirty-one years old when he perished, leaving behind him a name much fairer than his fortune had been happy. After suffering the greatest misfortunes in his family and person, the supreme rank to which Galba's adoption should have raised him, vanished in four days, and served only to hasten his death. I have said enough of Vinus, and shall only add that * his will did not take place, on account of his immense riches, whereas Piso's poverty secured the execution of his.

*Phil. &
Suet. Galb.*

Galba's body remained a long time exposed to every insult, without any one's attempting to take care of it, till at length Helvidius Priscus with Otho's leave carried it off, and delivered it to one of Galba's slaves called Argius, who gave it a homely burial in the gardens belonging

* Testamentum T. Vinii magnitudine opum irritum. Pisonis supremum voluntatem paupertas firmavit. *Tac.*

longing to his family. His head, after being A.R. 820.
long the sport of the lowest creatures in the A. C. 69.
army, was purchased for a hundred pieces of Tac.
gold, by a freeman of Patrobius's, to take on
it a low revenge, to appease the manes of his
patron, a freeman of Nero's, put to death by
Galba. He used it with the utmost indignity
before the tomb of Patrobius, and it was the
next day before Argius could get it, when he
burnt it, and added the ashes to those of the
body.

Such * was the fate of Galba when seventy Galba's
character.
three years old, after enjoying under the reigns
of five succeeding princes a constant series of
prosperity: happier far whilst others reigned
than when he himself was emperor. His fa-
mily was one of the most noble in Rome, and
very opulent. Himself was no great genius; Suet. Galb.
22.
he was rather exempt from vice than endowed
with virtue: though still it must be owned, that
if he had not those vices which are destructive
of society, he had his personal faults, the shame
and infamy of which are sufficient to sully his
memory. Though not indifferent to praise, he
avoided ostentation. The riches of another
2 could

* Hunc exitum habuit Ser. Galba tribus & septuaginta
annis, quinque principes prospera fortuna emensus, & alieno
imperio felicior, quam suo. Vetus in familia nobilitas,
magnæ opes: ipse medium ingenium, magis extra vitia
quam cum virtutibus. Famæ nec incuriosus, nec venditor.
Pecuniæ alienæ non appetens, suæ parcus, publicæ avarus.—
Amicorum libertorumque, ubi in bonos incidisset, sine re-
prehensione patiens: si mali forent usque ad culpam igna-
rus. Sed claritas natalium, & metus temporum obtentui, ut
quod segnitia erat, sapientia vocaretur Major privato
vixit, dum privatus fuit, & omnium consensu capax imperii,
nisi imperasset. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. could not tempt him : he took care of his own,
 A. C. 69. and was covetous of the public money. His friends and freemen governed him. If they were honest, his docility did not hurt his reputation : but if they were knaves, his complaisance for them rendered him despicable. But his high birth, and the badness of the times in which he lived, were foils to his weaknesses, and made that be thought wisdom, which in fact was imbecility. I have already said that he acquitted himself with honour of the several employments through which he passed. Universally esteemed, the condition of a private man, so long as he was such, seemed beneath him ; and every one would have judged him worthy of the empire, had he never been emperor.

He is the last emperor of a noble and ancient family. I cannot help observing here, that Galba was the last Roman emperor descended from an ancient family. All his successors were but upstarts, whose ancestors do not appear in the annals of the republican government. Four succeeding emperors had made it their study during sixty years to extirpate every great name : and the few that escaped their cruelties, endeavoured to stifle the dangerous splendour of their birth, by the obscurity in which they lived.

• OTHO.

O T H O.

SECT. II.

Universal eagerness to flatter Otho. He saves Marius Celsus from the fury of the soldiers. Prætorian prefects and city prefect named by the soldiers. The senate decrees Otho all the titles of supreme power. Terror of the Romans on account of two such pretenders to the empire as Otho and Vitellius. Otho's good actions. He ranks Marius Celsus among his friends. Death of Tigellinus. Otho eludes the desires of the people who demanded the death of Galvia Crispinilla. The consulships settled. Priesthoods properly distributed. Favour judiciously granted by Otho to the soldiers. Otho's excessive facility in some things. He restores the statues of Poppæa, and seems to intend to honour the memory of Nero. Advantage gained in Mæsia over the Rhoxolan Sarmatians. Sedition caused by the rash and indiscreet zeal of the soldiers for Otho. Otho's speech to the seditious. Two of the ring-leaders put to death. Terrors and alarms in the city. Pretended prodigies. Overflowing of the Tiber. Origin of the emperor Vitellius. His character, vices, and way of life, till he was sent by Galba into Germany. The German legions disposed to revolt. Vitellius is received by the Germanic legions with infinite

finite joy. Characters of Valens and Cæcina, chief authors of the revolt in favour of Vitellius. The evil is still increased by some nations of Gaul. Preparations towards a speedy revolt. The oath taken to the senate and Roman people. Vitellius proclaimed emperor. Several officers sacrificed to the fury of the soldiers. Others screened from their rage by art. The troops near the German armies join Vitellius's party. Contrast between the ardour of the troops and Vitellius's indolence. Plans of war formed by Vitellius's generals. Valen's march to the Cottian Alps. Cæcina's march. Disaster of the Helvetic nation. Cæcina crosses the Pænine Alps. Otho and Vitellius sound and lay snares for each other. The families of Otho and Vitellius preserved. Strength of Otho's party. Otho's plan of war. He confines Dolabella to Aquinum, and sets a guard over him. Trouble and uneasiness in Rome at the approach of war. Otho's haste to set out. He takes leave of the senate and does an act of goodness and justice. He harangues the people. Servile adulation of the multitude. He sets out, being preceded by a body of troops destined to defend the passage of the Po. He suffers great fatigue. Exploits of Otho's fleet. Otho's land forces and Vitellius's begin to skirmish. Ostentation of Cæcina and his wife. He besieges Placentia to no purpose, and retires to Cremona. Otho's troops distrust their leaders. Great advantages gained by Otho's generals over Cæcina. Furious sedition in Valen's army. Ardour of Valen's troops to join Cæcina. Jealousy between Cæcina and Valens. Comparison of Otho and Vitellius. Otho resolves to venture
a battle

a battle contrary to the advice of his best generals. Reasons of Otho's haste to engage. Otho retires to Brixellum before the battle. Engagement in an island in the Po, wherein Vitellius's troops have the advantage. Otho's army badly governed. Motions of that army to seek the enemy. Battle of Bedriac in which Otho's army is defeated. The conquered submit and swear allegiance to Vitellius. Otho kills himself. His funeral. The soldiers regret him, and after his example several of them kill themselves. His character. False Nero. One informer punished at the suit of another informer more powerful than him.

IT never appeared more plainly than at Galba's death, how little the attachment of a multitude, ever ready to submit to the law of the strongest, is to be depended on. The change was so sudden and total, that you would have * thought, says Tacitus, another senate, and another Roman people had sprung up. All ran to the camp, striving who should be there first. Galba was highly censured, the judgment of the soldiers praised, and Otho's hand kissed by every one. The more these demonstrations were insincere, the more pains were taken to make them seem the effect of real zeal. Otho on his side studied to be affable and pleasing to all: he endeavoured, both with his voice and action, to calm the angry menacing

A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.
Universal
eagerness
to flatter
Otho.
Tac. Hist.
L. 45.

* Alium crederes senatum, alium populum. Ruere cuncti in castra, anteire proximos, certare cum præcurrentibus, increpare Galbam, laudare militum judicium, exosculari Othonis manum; quantoque magis falsa erant quæ fiebant, tanto plura facere. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. menacing soldiers, and affected a mildness, not
 A. C. 69. less deceitful perhaps than the homage that
 was paid him.

He saves
 Marius Cel-
 sus from
 the fury of
 the soldiers.

On this occasion he preserved from great danger Marius Celsus consul elect, who, to the last extremity had remained faithful to Galba. The furious soldiers demanded his death with loud cries, hating * his virtues and accomplishments as much as they ought to have hated vice. Besides the atrocious injustice of such a proceeding, the example was terrible, and might have been a prelude to the murder of the most honest men, and perhaps to laying waste and plundering the city. Though Otho's † authority was not yet sufficiently established to prevent crimes, yet he had power enough to order them. He commanded Marius to be put in irons, as if to reserve him for some great punishment, and by that feint saved him from a death otherwise inevitable.

Prætorian
 prefect and
 city prefect
 named by
 the soldiers.

The caprice of the soldiers began to dictate laws. Of their own authority they chose for prefects, Plotius Ferinus and Licinius Proculus. Plotius formerly but a private soldier, and afterwards commander of the city watch, was one of the first that declared for the new emperor. Proculus was familiarly intimate with Otho, and thought to have been of service to him in the execution of his designs.—The soldiers named a city prefect too, making choice of Flavius Sabinus, who had held that post under Nero. The great regard many had

* *Industriæ ejus innocentæque, quasi malis artibus, infensi. Tac.*

† *Sed Othoni nondum auctoritas inerat ad prohibendum scelus: jubere jam poterat. Tac.*

had for his brother Vespasian, at that time A. R. 820. making war in Judea, was a powerful recommendation in his favour. A. C. 69.

The * crimes with which this fatal day was sullied, were terminated by rejoicings, which added to the heinousness of them. The city prefect, become head of the senate by the death of the two consuls, convened that assembly, in which adulation was lavished beyond measure. The magistrates and senators running thither in a great hurry, decreed Otho the power of tribune, the name of Augustus, and all the titles of supreme authority, vying with each other to wipe off, by their immoderate praises, the injurious reproaches with which they had so lately loaded him. Their policy was rewarded, none could perceive that Otho, when emperor, retained the least resentment for affronts offered him when a private man. His reign was so short, that it might be difficult to say, whether he had really forgot them, or only deferred his revenge. Otho, acknowledged by the people and senate, left the camp, went to the forum, which still swam in blood, and crossing it amidst the heaps of dead bodies, ascended to the capitol, and from thence repaired to the palace.

There is no occasion to say, that whilst he was applauded in appearance, he was secretly dreaded and detested: and as the news of Vitellius's revolt, which had been suppressed whilst Galba lived, now began to be publicly known, there was not a citizen who did not pity the hard fate of the republic, destined to

Terror of the Romans on account of two such pretenders to the empire, as Otho and Vitellius. Tac. Hist. be I. 50.

* *Exacto per accelera die, novissima malorum fuit lætitia.*
Tac.

A.R. 820. be a prey to one or other of these two unwor-
 A. C. 69. thy rivals. Not only the senators and knights,
 whose rank obliged them to take some concern
 in the public affairs, but even the lower peo-
 ple were grievously afflicted to see those two,
 the most detested and contemptible of men for
 their infamous debauches, cowardice, and dis-
 soluteness, raised, and, as it were, purposely
 chosen by some ill fated destiny to ruin the
 empire. They called to mind, not recent ex-
 amples of cruelties, exercised by princes over
 private persons during peace, but general dis-
 asters of civil wars, the city of Rome taken
 and retaken by its own citizens, the desolation
 of Italy, the provinces laid waste, Philippi,
 Pharsalia, Perousa and Modena, names famous
 for bloody battles fought by Romans against
 Romans. "The universe, said they, was on
 "the brink of ruin, even when the supreme
 "rank was disputed by rivals of superior me-
 "rit. But yet the empire subsisted under
 "Cæsar and Augustus, as the republic would
 "have done, if Pompey * or Brutus had gain-
 "ed the day. But to † which of these shall
 "we wish success? Vitellius or Otho? Our
 "prayers for either of them would be impious
 "and detestable. What choice can be made
 "between two men, the event of whose war
 "can

* We are to understand this as the sentiment of the mul-
 titude, not of Tacitus. It is very uncertain whether Pom-
 pey, had he been victorious, would have let the old form of
 government subsist: Tacitus rather thought the contrary, as
 may be seen c. 38. b. ii. of his Hist.

† Nunc pro Othone, anpro Vitellio, in templa ituros?
 utrasque impias preces, utraque detestanda vota, inter duos
 quorum bello solum id scires, deteriorem fore qui vicisset.
Tac.

“ can be no other, than to shew us how much A.R. 820.
 “ the conqueror excels in vice?” Some cast A. C. 69.
 their eyes on Vespasian. But that was a distant hope, and even if it could take place, they were not sure of finding in Vespasian so good a prince as the event proved him.

Otho's conduct however deceived every one. Otho's
 He did not give himself up to idleness or pleasure; he was active, careful of the public interest, and maintained the dignity of his rank, with a care and assiduity worthy an emperor. good actions.
 None indeed depended on that change: It was thought he only suspended his pleasures, and concealed his passions; and it was feared, * those affected virtues, would soon give way to his natural vices.

He was sensible that nothing could do him He ranks
 more honour than mildness and clemency, of Marius
 which he made a well-judged use with regard Celsus
 to Marius Celsus. Having screened him, as I among his
 have said, from the fury of the soldiers, he friends.
 sent for him to the capitol. Celsus † generously confessed his constant fidelity to Galba, and made a merit of it to Otho, who might hope to find in him as true a friend. Otho, far from speaking in the stile of an offended prince, instantly admitted Celsus into the number of his friends, and soon after appointed him one of his generals in the war against Vitellius. Celsus ‡ adhered to Otho, as if his fate had been to be always faithful and always unfortunate

* *Eoque plus formidinis afferebant falsæ virtutes, et vitia reditura. Tac.*

† *Celsus constanter servatæ erga Galbam fidei crimen confessus, exemplum ultro imputavit. Tac.*

‡ *Mansitque Celso velut fataliter etiam pro Othone fides, integra et infelix. Tac.*

A. R. 820. fortunate. The nobleness with which Otho behaved towards Celsus made a great noise. The first men in the city were delighted at it, the multitude praised and celebrated the deed, and even the soldiers were not displeased: their first fury subsiding, they could not help * admiring his virtues, though they could not love them.

Death of Tigellinus. The death of Tigellinus gave the public not much less satisfaction. We have seen how much the people were incensed against that odious and abominable minister of Nero's. The hatred he so justly deserved himself, joined to that which the protection of Vinus had likewise brought upon him, broke out anew on Otho's accession to the throne. The forum, circus, and theatre resounded with the cries of those who demanded his death: and the new prince was willing to gain the affection of the multitude, by the sacrifice of a wretch worthy the greatest punishment. He, therefore, sent Tigellinus orders to die. Tigellinus had retired to a place near Sinuessa, having first taken care to have ships always ready to sail, and carry him off in case of danger. The order prevented him; forced to obey it, he cut his throat with a razor, in the presence of his concubines, who never left him.

Otho eludes the desires of the people, who demanded the death of Galvia Crispinilla. The people likewise demanded the death of Galvia Crispinilla, a bold intriguing woman, governante to the infamous Sporus under Nero, and after that an accomplice with Clodius Macer in his revolt in Africa, and instigatrix of the project of starving Rome. But Crispinilla found a better protection than Tigellinus

* Eandem virtutem admirantibus cui irascebantur. Tac.

gellinus. Sporus was one who stood her friend A.R. 820. with Otho. Besides which, the immense riches A.C. 69. that woman had heaped up by a thousand extortions, had made her find an honourable match with a man of consular dignity. Otho, giving too much way to these considerations, eluded the demands of the people under various pretences, and though an ill-timed indulgence, invented subterfuges, which did him no honour. Galvia Crispinilla escaped the effects of public hatred under this reign, and likewise under Vitellius; and under Vespasian attained a high degree of credit in Rome, because * she was rich and had no children. A situation, says Tacitus, that always will command regard and deference under good as well as bad princes.

It was usual, as I have often observed, for The consuls new emperors to be consuls. Accordingly ^{consulships settled.} Otho named himself consul, with his brother ^{Tac. Hist. I. 77.} Salvius Titianus, who held that post under Claudius, in the room of Galba and Vinus. They were to remain in office till the first of May. Otho behaved with great moderation in settling the consulships for the rest of the year. Those who had been appointed by Nero and Galba, succeeded in their turns: of them, the most worthy observation, are Marius Celsus, and Arrius Antoninus, who seems to have been grandfather by the mother's side, to the emperor Antoninus Pius. A political reason induced Otho to give Virginus Rufus a share in the consulship. His design

in

* Potens pecunia, et orbitate, quæ bonis malis que temporibus juxta valent. Tac.

A.R. 820. in so doing was, to please the German legions,
 A. C. 69. who had always revered that great man; and
 by that bait, to gain them over if possible.

Priest-
 hoods pro-
 perly dis-
 tributed. The care he took to promote to the dignities
 of augurs and pontiffs, some illustrious old
 men, to whom nothing was wanting but those
 titles to attain the summit of honours, was
 greatly pleasing to the Romans. Nor were
 they less delighted with his kindness towards
 the young nobility, several of whom, lately re-
 turned from exile, received from him priest-
 hoods, which had formerly been in their fa-
 milies.

Favour ju-
 diciously
 granted by
 Otho to the
 soldiers.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 46. I rank amongst Otho's laudable actions a
 favour he granted the soldiers, but with pru-
 dence and judgment, immediately after Galba's
 death. They complained of a kind of tri-
 bute they were obliged to pay their centurions,
 in order to be exempted from certain military
 labours. It was a settled custom, or rather
 abuse, productive of many inconveniencies,
 contrary to the good order of discipline. Otho,
 who thought the soldiers complaints very just,
 but was unwilling to indispose the minds of
 the centurions, by depriving them of a per-
 quisite they thought their due, declared he
 would pay out of the imperial treasure, what
 the soldiers had been used to allow their cap-
 tains; a useful institution constantly observed
 by his successors.

Otho's ex-
 cessive fa-
 cility in
 some
 things.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 77. To these actions, by which Otho deserved
 the public applause, he added others not easi-
 ly excused but by the necessity of circum-
 stances. Three senators condemned under
 Claudius or Nero for extortion, were restored
 to

to their dignities. What * was the punishment of unjust and tyrannical avarice, was called persecution for pretended crimes of high treason: an odious word, the justly detested iniquity of which, abolished even good and wholesome laws. A.R. 820.
A.C. 69.

Tacitus likewise disapproves of the liberalities and privileges he lavishly bestowed on various cities and nations; the colonies of Seville and Merida, recruited by the addition of several new families; the Demesnes of Boëtica encreased, by annexing to them several cities and territories in Mauritania; and the right of Roman burgessy granted to the people of Langres. Otho was naturally fond of giving, and strove to make himself friends and creatures every where.

But what can admit of no excuse is, his re-
turn of tenderness for Poppæa, and his shew
of veneration for the memory of Nero. By
a decree of the senate, Poppæa's statues were
set up again, when the best thing that could
have happened to her was to have been forgot.
He likewise suffered private men to restore
Nero's statues, and make a shew of the pic-
tures of him: the intendants and freemen who
had been employed by him, were again pro-
vided for. The first order on the imperial
treasury which he signed, was for fifty † mil-
lions of sesterces, destined to finish the *golden
palace*: he did not reject the acclamations of a
vile mob who saluted him by the names of
Nero

* Placuit ignoscentibus, verso nomine, quod avaritia fû-
erat, videri majestatem: cujus tum odio etiam bonæ leges
peribant. Tac.

† Four hundred thousand pounds.

A. R. 820. *Nero Otho* : and it is affirmed, that he himself A. C. 69. added the name of Nero to his signature to letters sent to some governors of provinces. But when he perceived how much the chief and best men in Rome were displeased at those attempts to revive the memory of so detested a tyrant, he was prudent enough to go no farther.

Advantages gained in Mæsia over the Rhoxolan Sarmatians.
Tac. Hist. l. 79.

The beginning of Otho's reign was marked by an advantage gained over the Rhoxolan Sarmatians. What is most interesting to us in that event, in itself but trifling, is the description Tacitus gives of the Sarmatian manner of fighting. It is * very singular, says that historian, that all the strength and vigour of those people, should be, as it were, out of themselves. Nothing so weak and cowardly as they are when a foot; but on horseback, and in squadrons, they are scarce to be resisted. Their arms are a pike and long sword, which they wield with both hands: they have no shields: their chief men wear heavy cuirasses, proof against arrows, but when once beat down, they cannot rise again under the weight. A body of nine thousand horse, of those Rhoxolan Sarmatians, finding the frontiers of Mæsia badly guarded, every one being intent on preparing against a civil war, broke in upon that country in the winter season, and carried off a great booty. The third legion, backed by its usual reinforcement of auxiliaries, marched against them, and a thaw happening which made the whole country a perfect bog, easily defeated them. The Sarmatian

* *Mirum dictu, ut sit omnis Sarmatarum virtus velut extra ipsos. Nihil ad pedestrem pugnam tam ignavum, ubi per turbas advenire, vix ulla acies obstiterit. Tac.*

Sarmatian horse sticking in the mud, and not able to stir, the Romans had hardly any thing more to do, but to kill their almost defenceless enemies: Otho prided himself greatly on this victory. He rewarded M. Apronius, governor of Mesia, with a triumphal statue, and his three lieutenants with the ornaments of consul. His ambition was to be thought a prince fortunate in war, and under whose auspices the Roman arms acquired a new degree of lustre. A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.

We cannot refuse him the merit of being extremely beloved by the troops. Their zeal for him knew hardly any bounds, and was the occasion of a sedition that was near proving fatal to the city.

Otho had ordered a cohort that was at Ostium, to come to Rome, and Crispinus, the prætorian prefect, was directed to see the men armed. That officer, the better to execute his orders, chose the evening as the most quiet part of the day, and, opening the arsenal, loaded the proper arms on the waggons belonging to the cohort. The soldiers took umbrage at the very precautions intended to avoid all disturbance; they suspected every thing: and * most of them already heated by wine, grew quite furious at the sight of the arms. They accused their officers of treason, and taxed them with a design to arm the senate's slaves against Otho. In an instant the report was spread about; all flocked together, some without any bad intent, and drunk as they were, not knowing what they did; the

Sedition caused by the rash and indiscreet zeal of the soldiers for Otho.

* *Visa inter temulentos arma, cupidinem sui movere.*
Tac.

VOL. V.

G

bad

A. R. 820. bad out of hopes of plunder ; and the gene-
 A. C. 69. rality, as is natural to the mob, because they
 saw a crowd gathered, and wanted to know
 what they were doing : the good had taken
 to their tents, it being their hour to retreat.
 The tribune and strictest of the centurions,
 attempting to oppose the seditious, were killed
 on the spot ; and the impetuous soldiers taking
 possession of the arms, drew their swords, and
 mounting their horses, rode full speed to the
 city and palace. Otho was giving a great en-
 tertainment to eighty magistrates and senators,
 several of whom had brought their wives with
 them. The consternation was extreme : it
 seemed doubtful whether it was some sudden
 fit of madness that had seized the soldiers, or
 a piece of treachery in the emperor : none
 knew whether they had best go or stay : the
 more they affected to seem unconcerned, the
 more their trouble betrayed their inward ter-
 ror : but above all they examined Otho's coun-
 tenance, whose * fears for himself encreased
 theirs. He did not deserve to be suspected.
 As much concerned at the danger to which
 he saw the senate exposed, as if it had been
 intended against himself, he sent the prætorian
 prefects to calm the soldiers, and desired his
 guests to retire as quick as they could. All
 fled in disorder ; the magistrates throwing a-
 way the badges of their respective dignities,
 and taking with them none of their attendants
 by which they might be known ; old men and
 women wandered about the streets in the dark.
 Few returned to their own houses, but thought
 themselves

* Utque evenit, inclinatis semel ad suspicionem menti-
 bus, quum timeret Otho, timebatur. Tac.

themselves safer with their friends, who, the A.R. 820.
more obscure they were, were thought most A.C. 69.
proper to conceal them with safety.

Even the barriers of the palace could not stop their impetuous rage; but wounding a tribune and a centurion who endeavoured to check them, they penetrated as far as the hall in which the entertainment was given, and insisted on seeing Otho. They exclaimed against their officers and the whole senate; and, unable to point out any one in particular, their rage extended to all. Otho, obliged to stoop from the majesty of his rank to prayers and even tears, could not appease them without great difficulty. They returned unwillingly to their camp, without accomplishing their design, though they did enough to render themselves criminal.

The city * looked the next day as if it had been taken by the enemy. All the houses were shut up, hardly any would venture into the streets, and the few who did shew themselves, seemed quite terrified and alarmed. As to the soldiers, they put on sorrowful faces, though there was no great repentance in their hearts. The two prætorian prefects took them by bands, not daring to assemble them in a body; and spoke to them, each according to his character, with more or less mildness or severity. The harangues were closed by a distribution of five * thousand sesterces to each man; after 407.
which preliminary, Otho ventured into the camp. The tribunes and centurions imme-
2 diately

* Postera die, velut capta urbe, clausæ domus, rarus per vias populus, mœsta plebs, dejecti in terram militum vultus, ac plus tristitiæ quam pœnitentiæ. Tac.

A. R. 820. dlately surrounding him, pulled off the badges
 A. C. 69. of their posts, and begged to be dismissed with safety. The soldiers were sensible of the odium that request must throw on them, and behaving with great composure and submission, invoked even the emperor's severity against the authors of the sedition.

Otho's * mind was agitated by various thoughts. He saw the soldiers were divided in their sentiments, that the good wished a speedy stop could be put to such licentiousness, but that the greater part, fond of seditions, and not able to bear any other than a weak and feeble government, would readily be led into a civil war by the hopes of prey and plunder. Reflecting on himself, he readily conceived, that the ancient virtue and severity, would but ill become a prince who had attained the supreme rank by the blackest of crimes. On the other hand, the danger the city and senate were in, made a deep impression on him. At last, taking his resolution, he spoke to them as follows :

Otho's
 speech to
 the sedi-
 tious.

“ I come not here, my dear fellow soldiers,
 “ to encourage your bravery, nor animate
 “ your zeal to serve me: you possess those
 “ sentiments to a degree even beyond what I
 “ would wish, and all I have to desire on that
 “ head is, that you will moderate them. Cu-
 “ pidity,

* Otho quanquam turbidis rebus, & diversis militum animis, quum optimus quisque remedium præsentis licentiæ posceret; vulgus & plures, seditionibus & ambitioso impetio læti, perturbas & raptus facilius ad civile bellum impellerentur: simul reputans non posse principatum scelere quæsitum, subita modestia, & prisca gravitate retineri, sed discrimine urbis & periculo senatus anxius, postremo ita disseruit. Tac.

“pidity, hatred, or fear of danger, are the mo- A. R. 820.
 “tives that generally occasion disturbances in A. C. 69.
 “armies. Nothing of that kind was the case
 “in the tumult you lately made: it proceeded
 “only from your too strong attachment to your
 “emperor, and your zeal, which on that occa-
 “sion, you consulted more than your prudence.
 “But * the best of motives, if not directed by
 “wisdom, will be productive of pernicious con-
 “sequences.

“We are setting out for war. Must the
 “dispatches of every courier be read before
 “the army? Must every council be held in
 “public? Would that suit the welfare of the
 “state, or the rapidity with which it is neces-
 “sary to seize some occasions? There † are
 “things which a soldier ought not to know,
 “as well as others of which he should not
 “be ignorant. The authority of a general,
 “and the severity of discipline often require,
 “that even officers should not be acquainted
 “with the reasons of the orders they receive.
 “If every one was allowed to examine and
 “ask why an order is given, all subordination
 “would be at an end, and the prerogatives
 “of supreme command must end with it.
 “Will any one when we are at war, presume
 “to take up arms in the middle of the night?
 “Shall one or two wretches (for I cannot
 “think the authors of this sedition more nu-
 merous)

* Nam sæpe honestas rerum causas, ni iudicium adhibeas, perniciosi exitus consequuntur. Tac.

† Tam nescire quædam milites, quam scire oportet. Ita se ducum auctoritas, sic rigor disciplinæ habet, ut multa etiam centuriones tribunosque tantum juberi expediat. Si, cur jubeantur, quærere singulis liceat, pereunte obsequio etiam imperium intercidit. Tac.

A. R. 820. "merous) one or two madmen heated by wine,
 A. C. 69. "imbrue their hands in the blood of their
 "officers, and force their emperor's tent? It is
 "true you did it out of affection to me. But
 "in such an uproar, in the dark, in so gene-
 "ral a confusion, evil-minded persons may
 "take advantages against me. What other
 "sentiments, what other disposition could Vi-
 "tellius with his satellites wish us, if it were
 "in his power? Would he not be charmed
 "to find [discord and misunderstanding reign
 "among us? that the soldier should no lon-
 "ger obey his centurion, nor the centurion
 "his tribune: that mixing and confounding
 "together horse and foot, without rule, or-
 "der, or discipline, we might rush on to ine-
 "vitable destruction. It is by * obedience,
 "my dear comrades, that an army must sub-
 "sist, and not by an indiscreet curiosity to pry
 "into the general's views and orders. That
 "army which is most moderate and submissive
 "before action, is always most brave and
 "courageous in it. Arms and courage are
 "your province; mine, to consider and di-
 "rect your valour. Few of you are guilty;
 "two only shall be punished: let every other
 "man banish from his thoughts the horrors
 "of that guilty night: and let these audacious
 "cries against the senate, never more be
 "heard in any army. To demand the extir-
 "pation of a body of men who preside over
 "the

* *Parendo potius, commitiones, quam imperia ducum
 sciscitando, res militares continentur: & fortissimus in ipso
 discrimine exercitus est, qui ante discrimen quietissimus.
 Vobis arma & animus sit: mihi consilium & virtutis vestrae
 regimen relinquite. Tac.*

" the empire, who are the flower and elect of A. R. 820.
 " all the provinces, is what even the Germans, A. C. 69.
 " Vitellius is now arming against us, would
 " not dare to do. And would the children of
 " Italy, youths truly Roman, proceed to such
 " bloody rage against that august order, the
 " splendour of which gives us so noble a su-
 " periority over the ignoble vileness of Vitel-
 " lius's party? Vitellius has nations on his
 " side: he has a body of troops that looks like
 " an army: but the senate is on our side; and
 " therefore the republic is so too. Our ad-
 " versaries are consequently enemies to the re-
 " public. What! * do you imagine this great
 " and lofty city consists in its houses, build-
 " ings and heaps of stones? Those mute and
 " inanimate beings are easily destroyed and
 " renewed, and the consequence not great.
 " But it is the senate that is its soul, and on
 " the preservation of that body depend eter-
 " nity of empire, the peace of the universe,
 " and your welfare as well as mine. That
 " body was instituted under happy auspices
 " by the father and founder of this city; it
 " has subsisted from the kings down to the
 " emperors, still flourishing and immortal: it
 " is our duty to transmit its majesty to our
 " descendants, as unsullied as we received it
 " from our ancestors. For, as from you sena-
 " tors are born, so are princes formed by the
 " senate." This

* Quid? vos pulcherrimam hanc urbem, domibus & tec-
 tis, & congestu lapidum, stare creditis? Muta ista & inanima
 intercidere ac reparari promiscue possunt. Æternitas rerum,
 & pax gentium, & mea cum vestra salus, incolumitate sena-
 tus firmatur. Tac.

A.R. 820. This speech, a mixture of severity and indulgence, calculated to check, and at the same time, flatter the soldiers, was extremely relished and applauded. They were highly pleased too, that Otho would be content to punish only two of the ringleaders, for whom none interested themselves; by which means, if their mutinous indocility was not cured, it was at least appeased for a time.

A. C. 69.
Two of the
ringleaders
put to
death.
Plut. Oth.

Fears and
alarm in
the city.
Tac. Hist.
I. 85.

The city was not yet restored to peace. The preparations that were making for war, kept up troubles and disturbances in it: and though the soldiers attempted nothing in a body contrary to the public peace and quiet, yet they spread themselves about in the houses like spies, laying aside their military dress, the better to be disguised, and maliciously took notice of whatever was said by those whose nobility, rank and riches, made them most liable to suspicion. It was even thought that some of Vitellius's emissaries had crept into Rome, and secretly watched and sounded the dispositions of the inhabitants: so that all were full of distrusts, and the citizens thought themselves safe no where, but within their own houses. In public the trouble was still greater. Every news that arrived (for Vitellius's army had long been in march, and was drawing near Italy) made every man alert, and compose his looks and behaviour for fear of seeming either to despair of the event, if the report was bad, or not to rejoice enough at the success, if good. But * especially the senators, when

* Coacto vero in curiam senatu, arduus rerum omnium modus, ne contumax silentium, ne suspecta libertas,

when assembled, knew not what turn to give A. R. 820.
 their speeches, nor how to behave, so as not A. C. 69.
 to lay themselves too open. Silence might be
 imputed to ill humour, and liberty be suspect-
 ed: whilst Otho, their new emperor, but lately
 raised from a private station, could not be ig-
 norant of what was flattery. The senators
 therefore studied to screen themselves under
 ambiguous meanings and vague talk, calling
 Vitellius an enemy and a parricide, and load-
 ing him with reproaches, in which the most
 prudent took care not to particularize any
 thing: Some indeed hinted at positive facts,
 but it was when several were talking loud at
 the same time, and they themselves made such
 a noise, and muttered so, that none could hear
 half of what they said.

The public alarms were encreased by pre-
 tended prodigies, which * formerly, says Ta-
 citus in times of ignorance, were taken notice
 of in profound peace, but which now obtain
 little more credit than what some present dan-
 ger gives them. A sudden overflowing of the
 Tiber, was a real disaster. The flood came
 with such impetuosity, that it bore down the
 wooden bridge and the quays, and spread not
 only to the lower parts of the city, but even to
 those where none would have thought such an
 accident

Pretended
prodigies.

Overflow-
ing of the
Tiber.

tas. Et privato Othoni nuper, atque eadem dicenti, nota
 adulatio. Igitur versare sententias, et huc atque illuc tor-
 quere, hostem et parricidam Vitellium vocantes: providen-
 tissimus quisque, vulgaribus conviciis; quidam vera probra
 jacere, in clamore tamen, et ubi plurimæ voces, aut tumultu
 verborum sibi ipsi obstrepentes. Tac.

* Et plura alia, rudibus seculis etiam in pace observata,
 quæ nunc tantum in metu audiuntur. Tac.

A. R. 820. accident could reach. It came so suddenly,
 A. C. 69. that none could guard against it. Several were swept away by the waters in the streets, others in greater number surprized in their shops, and even beds. A great quantity of corn was lost in the market place where it was exposed to sale. The consequence was a great dearth, labouring men could not work; and the waters, keeping up a considerable time, ruined the foundations of several buildings, which fell when they subsided. The people, ever superstitious, thought it a bad omen for Otho, who was just then preparing to set out for the war against Vitellius, that the height of the waters should prevent his marching through the Campus Martius and Flaminian way, which were his direct road.

Otho's departure reminds me, that I ought to give some account of the enemy he was going to fight, and of the steps by which Vitellius rose to the empire, together with the events that ensued thereon, to the time when his troops entered Italy.

Origin of
 the emperor
 Vitellius.

If the family from which the emperor Vitellius descended, was as ancient as that name is in history, it ought to be ranked amongst the first nobility of Rome. For * we find in the year, in which the kings were expelled, two brothers Vitellius, who seem not to have acted over fine parts, since they were condemned and executed as accomplices in the conspiracy of the Tarquins; though they held a considerable rank in the city, being nephews to Collatinus, and sons-in-law to Brutus. I wonder

* See the Hist. of the Rom. Rep. T. 1. b. 11.

der that those, who Suetonius tells us set about A. R. 820. illustrating the origin of that family, instead of A. C. 69. searching into fabulous stories, did not rather *Suet. Vit. 1. 3.* take this fact so famous and averred ; unless it be that they did not think a nobility, derived from traitors and enemies to their country, an honourable descent. However that may be, the pedigree of the emperor Vitellius cannot with certainty be traced any higher up than his grandfather P. Vitellius, a Roman knight, intendant under Augustus, and father of four sons, of whom the two most remarkable were P. Vitellius, the friend and avenger of Germanicus, and L. Vitellius, thrice consul and censor, and still more known by his mean flatteries, than by the great dignities he possessed. The latter had two sons, A. Vitellius the emperor, of whom we are speaking, and L. Vitellius, who was consul the same year as his elder brother, as we have observed.

A. Vitellius, one of the most unworthy men *His character, vices and way of life, till he was sent by Galba into Germany.* that ever disgraced imperial majesty, was born the seventh, or according to others, the twenty fourth of September, in the second year of Tiberius's reign. The last years of his infancy, and the first of his youth, were spent at Capræa, a place, the bare mention of which sufficiently implies what kind of life he led there : and it is thought that his dishonour was the price of the favours Tiberius conferred on his father, in making him consul, and governor of Syria. His whole life was of a piece with that shameful beginning : and his distinguishing characteristics are, debauches of every kind, and such habitual *Suet. Vit. 13.* excess of gluttony, that he constantly made himself vomit to have the pleasure of eating again.

A. R. 820. again. His name procured him an entrance at court, and he pleased Caligula by being a good coachman, and Claudius, by being a gamester. The same qualifications recommended him to Nero, whose favour he gained entirely by a very singular service, quite agreeable to that prince's taste. Nero passionately wished to appear on the stage as a musician, but some little remains of shame still prevented him. Strongly pressed by the cries of the people, who urged him to sing, he even withdrew, as if to avoid their too great importunities: but would have been very sorry to have been taken at his word. Vitellius, who presided over the games at which this farce was acted, appointed himself deputy from the spectators to beg of him to return and be prevailed on; and Nero thought himself highly obliged to him for using that pleasing violence. By that means it was, that Vitellius, beloved and favoured by three succeeding princes, went through all the offices of magistracy, and was even invested with the most honourable priesthoods, joining every dignity to every vice.

Shet. Vit.
8-7.

One however I must except which he had not, and that was avarice. Africa had no cause to complain of being harrassed or plundered by him, during the two years that he governed it, first as proconsul, and afterwards as his brother's lieutenant. But the indigence to which his profusions reduced him, forced him at last to be unjust: and when charged with the care of the public buildings, he was suspected of sinking the offerings and ornaments of the temples, substituting pewter in the room of silver, and gilded brass instead of gold.

Covetousness

Covetousness having once taken possession A. R. 820.
of his soul, caused him to be cruel to his own A. C. 69.
blood. He had a son by his first wife Petronia,
from whom he was separated, and who soon
after marrying Dolabella and dying, made that
son her heir, on condition that his father whose
prodigal temper she was well acquainted with,
should * emancipate him. Her design in tak-
ing that precaution was to preserve her wealth
for her son, but, in fact, it was the occasion of
his death. Vitellius emancipated him; but
after having compelled him to make a will in
his favour, poisoned him, spreading a report
that his son had attempted his life, and that
out of shame and rage to find himself discover-
ed, he had taken the poison destined for the
parricide.

The contempt in which Galba held Vitel-
lius, was, as I have said, the reason why that
emperor trusted him with the important com-
mand of the legions in Lower Germany. When
obliged to set out, he had not money enough
for the journey, but was obliged to pawn a
diamond ear-ring belonging to his mother
Sextilia, a lady of uncommon merit. He like-
wise let his house, sending his wife Galeria
and his children to lodge in a garret. His
creditors, and particularly the inhabitants of
Sinuessæ and Formii, whose money he had ap-
propriated to his own use, opposed his going,
and stopt his baggage. He carried it with so
high a hand, that he got the better of that
difficulty. A freeman to whom he was in-
debted,

* By the Roman emancipation, the son was dispensed
from all obedience to his father, so that he was entirely
master of his own person and fortune.

A.R. 820. debted, being more troublesome than the rest,
 A. C. 69. Vitellius commenced a criminal process against
 him, pretending he had struck him; and it
 cost the poor creditor fifty * thousand sesterces
 more to prevail on his debtor to drop all pro-
 ceedings. This example intimidated others,
 and Vitellius set out for Germany. He arriv-
 ed at the camp towards the first of December,
 the year before Galba's death, and found the
 legions in a great ferment, waiting only for an
 opportunity to revolt.

Tac. Hist.
c. 52.

The Ger-
 man le-
 gions dis-
 posed to
 revolt.
Tac. Hist.
l. 51.

That army was quite elated with the victory
 over Vindex: great honour and plunder gain-
 ed without fatigue or danger, were powerful
 motives that induced the soldiers to prefer war
 to peace, and the hope of riches to a quiet uni-
 form service. They were the more † confirm-
 ed in that way of thinking by the hardships
 they had long suffered in an almost savage
 country, and under a severe discipline, never
 relaxed even in times of peace; whereas civil
 dissensions could not but soften it by the op-
 portunities they offer of changing sides, and
 the impunity with which, in such cases, per-
 fidy is sure to pass. The Germanic legions
 formed all together a very powerful body: but
 till the last expedition, each soldier knew no-
 thing more than his own company: the legions
 had their separate quarters; the two armies
 were pent up within the limits of two different
 provinces. When united against Vindex, they
 made a trial of their own strength, and of the
 weakness

† *Diuque infructuosam et asperam militiam exercitus to-
 leraverat, ingenio loci cœlique, et severitate disciplinæ, quam
 in pace inexorabilem discordiæ civium resolvunt, paratiss-
 atrimque corruptoribus, et perfidia impunita. Tac.*

weakness of the Gauls; and encouraged by A.R. 820. the success they met with on that occasion, all A. C. 69. they wished for was a new war and fresh disturbances, no longer considering the Gauls but as conquered enemies.

The Gauls bordering on the Rhine, encouraged that spirit of animosity, and being connected with the legions by the same sentiments and interests, spurred them on against Galba's partizans, for so they had the assurance to call those who entered into the league with Vindex. The soldiers irritated more and more by their insinuations against the Seguani, Eduans, and all the richest people of Gaul, and measuring their hatred by the plunder they expected to make, their thoughts dwelt on nothing but taking of towns, laying waste lands, and heaping up treasures of gold and silver. Their greediness and arrogance, the usual vices of such as are strongest, were still heightened by the pride of the Gauls, boasting the immunities and rewards they had received from Galba.

To so many causes of disturbance, add the wicked reports that were maliciously spread about by evil-minded people, and to which the soldier rashly gave credit. It was said that Galba intended to decimate the legions, and break all their best officers. Bad news was brought from every quarter. From Rome, nothing was heard, but what inspired aversion, and even contempt for Galba; and those disadvantageous impressions were magnified and envenomed by going through Lyons, a city still obstinately attached to Nero's memory, and at enmity with the then government. But the

A. R. 820. * the source the most productive of turbulent
 A. C. 69. indiscreet and vague reports was the army itself, alternately agitated by hatred, fear, and a presumptuous confidence in its own strength.

Vitellius is Such was the disposition of the soldiers
 received by minds, that a commander of an illustrious
 the Ger- name, whose father had been thrice consul,
 manic le- and who had himself attained that age at which
 gions with maturity is still supported by vigour, and who
 infinite joy. was of an easy generous disposition, was re-
Suet. Vit. ceived as a present from heaven. No notice
 7. was taken of the meannesses his whole conduct
 was full of, and of which he had given frequent instances on the road: for he did not meet a soldier but he would kiss him on both sides of the face: in the inns where he stopt, he was indecently familiar with the servants and hostlers, never † failing every morning to ask them whether they had breakfasted, and producing from his own stomach a proof that he was not fasting.

Tac. Hist.
 I. 22.

It must however be owned, that the manner in which he behaved on his arrival at the army, deserves commendation. He visited carefully the winter quarters of the legions. A slothful indulgence, and a desire to please and flatter, was not the only motive that induced him to restore to their posts, the officers who had been degraded from them, and to efface the marks of ignominy, with which their names had been branded. Reason and justice were sometimes

* Sed plurima ad fingendum credendumque materies in ipsis castris, odio, metu, &, ubi vires suas respexerant, securitate. *Tac.*

† Ut mane singulos jamne jentassent sciscitaretur, seque fecisse ructu quoque ostenderet. *Suet.*

sometimes consulted. But above all he gained A.R. 820. honour by shunning the shameful avarice of A.C. 69. his predecessor Fonteius Capito, who sold employments, and weighed the merit of men by their money. His behaviour in that respect was prized much above its just value; it was according to the ideas of the multitude, a behaviour worthy an emperor, and not a consul only. Disinterested *judges would have thought Vitellius mean and low. The soldiers prejudiced in his favour, called that goodness and liberality, which was an excessive facility of giving without choice or measure, not only his own, but often the wealth of others; and his vices were by them thought virtues.

There were undoubtedly in the two armies, some good men, fond of peace and quiet; but the number of those in whom a turbulent pernicious spirit reigned, was by much the greatest. Of them none were more remarkable for their unbounded cupidity, and rashness equal to the most desperate attempts, than Aliaenus Cæcina and Fabius Valens, commanders of legions, the one in the army on the upper Rhine, under Hordeonius Flaccus, the other under Vitellius, in the army in lower Germany.

Valens was an old officer, who, after having tried to ingratiate himself with Galba, by giving him private intelligence against Virginius,

Characters of Valens and Cæcina, chief authors of the revolution in favour of Vitellius.

* Et Vitellius ut * apud severos humilis, ita comitatem bonitatemque faventes vocabant, quod sine modo, sine judicio, donaret sua, largiretur aliena ipsa vitia pro virtutibus interpretabantur. *Tac.*

* Both the sense and the authority of Freinshemius induce me to add the particle *ut* to the text.

A.R. 820. nius, and endeavouring to persuade him, that
 A.C. 69. he had delivered him from a dangerous enemy,
 by the death of Fonteius Capito, not receiv-
 ing for those pretended services so great a re-
 ward as he expected, taxed Galba with ingra-
 titude, and his false zeal became real and vio-
 lent hatred. He encouraged Vitellius to think
 of the throne. "Your name, said he to him,
 "is known throughout the whole empire;
 "the soldiers are devoted to you; Flaccus
 "Hordeonius is too weak to stop you; Britain
 "will join us; the German auxiliaries will fol-
 "low the other legions: the provinces are not
 "fond of the present government; an old
 "man is seated on the throne of the Cæsars,
 "where his power is precarious and near its
 "end: you have only to open your arms to
 "fortune, who steps forward to meet you.
 "Virginus's * want of resolution had a just
 "cause. He was only the son of a knight,
 "and by his birth beneath the empire had he
 "accepted it, and secure from danger by re-
 "fusing it. The case is very different with
 "you. Your father's three consulships, the
 "censorship which he likewise held, and the
 "honour he had of being Claudius's colleague,
 "are titles that call you to the throne, and do
 "not suffer you to remain with safety in a
 "private station." Such strong exhortations
 roused Vitellius from his indolence. He did
 not

* Merito dubitasse Virginium, equestri familia, ignoto
 patre; imparem si recepisset imperium, tutum si recusasset.
 Vitellio tres patris consulatus, censuram, collegium Cæsaris,
 imponere jampridem imperatoris dignationem, et auferre
 privati securitatem. *Qualiebatur his segne ingenium, ut con-*
cupisceret magis quam speraret. Tac.

not yet dare to hope, but began to wish : for A. R. 820.
till then he had never conceived a thought of A. C. 69.
that kind. Dion Cassius says, that some astro- Dio. Galb.
logers having long before that foretold him he
would be emperor, he used to laugh at them,
and mention that prediction as a proof of their
ignorance or knavery.

Cæcina was not less active in the army in Tac. Hist.
upper Germany than Valens was in the other, I. 53.
both animated by the same motives. Being
quæstor in Boëtica at the time of the revolu-
tion, by which Galba was raised to the throne,
he had been one of the most forward to em-
brace that party, and the command of a legion
was the reward of his zeal ; but he behaved ill,
and was convicted of purloining the public
money. Galba, who was inexorable in that
point, ordered him to be prosecuted for it.
Cæcina, as highly incensed as if he had been
injured, resolved to embroil matters, and plunge
the republic * into as great dangers as he him-
self was personally threatened with. He had
every qualification necessary to seduce the sol-
diers; youth, a fine person and unbounded cou-
rage and ambition. His speech was strong
and animated, his carriage bold, and his eyes
full of fire. No body could be more fit to lead
to the greatest extremities, an army so ill dis-
posed as that in which he had so great a com-
mand.

Every thing concurred to encrease the evil. The evil is still en-
The people of Treves, Langres and other cities creased by
of Gaul, who, having taken part against Vin- some na-
dex, had felt Galba's severity, joined their tions of
complaints to those of the soldiers spread a- Gaul.

2

mong

* Privata vulnere reipublicæ malis operire statuit. Tac.

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A. R. 820. mong them, and frightened them even with imaginary dangers. Things were carried so far, that the deputies of Langres, who came according to ancient custom, to bring the legions the * emblems of hospitality and friendship were very near raising a sedition in the army by their speeches: and Hordeonius Flaccus, having ordered them to retire privately in the night, a report was spread that he had murdered them: in consequence of which, those legions greatly alarmed, united for their mutual defence, and entered into a private league, in which they were joined by the auxiliary troops, who, till then, had been at variance with them. For †, says Tacitus, the bad agree in war, much more easily than they preserve concord in peace.

Preparations towards a speedy revolution. The oath taken to the senate and Roman people.

Things were in this situation when the first of January came round, on which day the oath of fidelity to the emperors was annually taken. The legions in lower Germany who were under Vitellius's command, took it, but with great difficulty, and manifest reluctance. None but the chief officers pronounced the words of the oath: the rest ‡ were silent, each watching his neighbour's motions, and all ready, as is frequently the case in critical affairs, to execute with ardour what none dare to begin. The spirit of mutiny was universal, though some legions shewed it more than others. The first and fifth carried their insolence so far

as

* A representation of two right hands joined together.

† Faciliore inter malos consensu ad bellum, quam in pace ad concordiam. *Tac.*

‡ Ceteri silentio, proximi cujusque audaciam expectantes: insita mortalibus natura propere sequi quæ piget inchoare. *Tac.*

as to throw stones at the images of Galba : the A. R. 820.
fifteenth and sixteenth only murmured and A. C. 69.
menaced.

In the army on the upper Rhine the fourteenth and eighteenth legions did not hesitate to declare against Galba, whose images they broke to pieces : and to avoid being taxed with open rebellion against the empire, the soldiers took the oath to the senate and Roman people, names long since disused, and almost forgot. In such a disturbance, some could not but be more audacious than others, and they were the leaders and promoters of the sedition. None, however, harangued in form, nor got on to any eminence or high place to speak to the soldiers, because * they had not yet fixed on any body, with whom they could make a merit of such a service.

Hordeonius Flaccus†, who commanded in chief, did not attempt to check the fury of the seditious, nor to keep within bounds those who as yet only hesitated, nor even to encourage the well-affected ; cowardly, timid, and exempt from vice, because he had not resolution enough to be vicious, he remained a quiet spectator of a disturbance it was his duty to prevent. The particular commanders of legions and the tribunes, imitated the indolence of their chief. Only four centurions dared to shew the least attachment to Galba, or defend his images against the insults of the rebels, and they only added to the fury of the soldiers, who

* Neque enim erat adhuc cui imputaretur. Tac.

† Spectator flagitii Hordeonius Flaccus consularis legatus aderat, non compescere ruentes, non retinere dubios, non cohortari bonos ausus, sed segnis, pavidus, et socordia innocens. Tac.

A.R. 820. who seized and loaded them with chains. After
 A. C. 69. that example, no trace remained of fidelity to
 Galba, nor of the oath of allegiance taken to
 him; and*, as it happens in all seditions, the
 greater number soon absorbed the rest, and be-
 came the only party.

Vitellius
 proclaimed
 emperor.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 56.

In the night preceding the second of Ja-
 nuary, the ensign who carried the eagle of the
 fourth legion, came to Cologne where Vitellius
 was, and finding him at table, told him that his
 legion, and the eighteenth had renounced obe-
 dience to Galba, and sworn fidelity to the se-
 nate and Roman people. That oath being a
 visible illusion, it was resolved to lay hold on
 fortune while she was yet undetermined, and
 no doubt was made, but that Vitellius ought
 to offer himself to the troops who wanted an
 emperor. Accordingly he dispatched couriers
 to the legions that obeyed him, and to their
 commanders, telling them, "That the army
 "on the upper Rhine no longer acknowledged
 "the authority of Galba. That of course, if
 "they thought that was rebellion, a war must
 "be undertaken; or if peace and unity were
 "preferred, a new emperor chosen. And in
 "that case, he insinuated there was much
 "less danger in taking one whom they had un-
 "der their eyes, than there would be in seek-
 "ing for a stranger at a great distance."

The first legion was nearest at hand, and
 Fabius Valens, the most ardent of all the ge-
 neral officers. He came to Cologne the next
 day, with a detachment of horse, and saluted
 Vitellius emperor. The hurry and precipita-
 tion

* Quod in seditionibus accidit, unde plures erant, omnes
 fuere. *Tac.*

tion with which he was proclaimed, might ^{A.R. 820.} have excused the indecency of it, had the ^{A. C. 69.} new emperor's behaviour been less mean and contemptible. He let the soldiers take him ^{Suet. Vit. 8.} from his apartment in his common dress without any badge of dignity, and carry him from street to street, holding in his hand a drawn sword, which was said to have been Julius Cæsar's, and was preserved as such in the temple of the god of war at Cologne. After the ceremony, instead of returning to his head quarters, Vitellius sat down to table in a house where an entertainment had been provided for him, and did not stir till forced by a fire that broke out in the room. The whole company was alarmed at the accident, and thought it a bad omen. "Never fear, said Vitellius, it is only a light that comes to light us." And that, according to Suetonius, was all he said to the soldiers on so important an occasion.

A behaviour so unbecoming imperial majesty, did not however prevent his being immediately acknowledged by all the legions of the lower province: and the army in upper Germany too, forgetting the names of senate and Roman people, of which a parade had been so lately made, swore allegiance to Vitellius: a * manifest proof that during the two preceding days, the republic had been only a pretence, and not an object of sincere attachment.

The people of Cologne, Treves, and Langres, were as zealous as the armies, offering troops, horses, arms and money. Every town, every

* *Scires illum (exercitum) priore biduo non penes rempublicam fuisse. Tac.*

A.R. 820. every man, vied with each other who should
 A.C. 69. be most forward : their emulation was not confined to heads of colonies and chief officers, who being at their ease, might make such offers without hurting themselves, and who had likewise room to expect great rewards after victory : but companies, and even private soldiers, brought their little savings, and those who had not money, gave their belts, military ornaments, and silvered arms out of a kind of fury and madness, or rather out of avidity, and in hopes of being amply rewarded.

Tac. Hist.
I. 62.
Suet. Vit.
a.

Vitellius having made an effort to praise the zeal of the soldiers, received from them the name of Germanicus : but for whatever reason it might be, he would not be called Cæsar, and deferred accepting the title of Augustus, though he did not absolutely reject it. He took some measures proper enough at first. Roman knights were charged with several offices which the emperor's freemen had used to perform. He granted the soldiers the same indulgence we have already observed and praised in Otho, ordering the kind of tribute the centurions levied on their companies to be paid out of the public treasury.

Several officers sacrificed to the fury of the soldiers. Others screened from their rage by art.

The multitude, ever furious in Revolutions wherein they are concerned, were for putting numbers of people to death. It is something in a prince like Vitellius, not to have always given way to such bloody desires, and to have sometimes eluded them by art, and by only putting in irons those whose deaths were demanded : for * nothing prevented his being openly

* *Apud savientes occidere patrum, ignoscere non nisi fallendo poterat. Tac.*

openly cruel amidst such a crew; but he was ^{A.R. 820.} obliged to deceive them in order to be hu- ^{A.C. 69.} mane. By that means he saved Julius Burdo, admiral of the fleet, on the Rhine. He had been instrumental in the ruin of Fonteius Capito, which the soldiers capriciously pretended to revenge, though they had had no great reason to love him during his life. Vitellius ordered Burdo to be arrested, and some time after, when old animosities were forgot, set him at liberty. Civilis, that famous Batavian, who afterwards gave the Romans so much uneasiness, was likewise screened on this occasion from the resentment of the soldiers, who probably looked upon him as a traitor to the empire. Fonteius Capito had suspected him of projects of rebellion, in consequence of which ^{Tac. Hist.} he was sent to Rome in Nero's reign, and ^{iv. 13.} acquitted by Galba. Vitellius spared him out of policy, not to irritate a haughty nation, where Civilis held a great rank. The most remarkable of those whose deaths the new emperor granted the soldiers, are the four centurions who opposed the revolt against Galba. Their * fidelity was a crime not to be pardoned by rebels.

Vitellius's party, already very strong of it- ^{The troops} self, was soon increased. The German armies ^{near the} were a signal to the neighbouring provinces. ^{German} Valerius Asiaticus, who commanded in Bel- ^{armies} gia, and Junius Blæsus, governor of the Ly- ^{join Vitel-} onnoise, acknowledged Vitellius. The troops ^{lius's party.} that guarded Rhætia did the same. Those in Britain, at variance among themselves, and with

* *Damnatos fidei crimine, gravissimo inter desciscentes,*
Tac.

A.R. §20. with their general, united however in favour
 A. C. 69. of the new emperor. They were commanded
Tac Hist. by Trebellius Maximus, an indolent inexpe-
 I. 60. & rienced man, who, besides being despised for
Agr. 16. his cowardice, was hated for his avarice and
 extortions. Roscius Cælius, commander of
 a legion, fomented the discontent of the sol-
 diers, and the sedition grew to such a height,
 that Trebellius * was obliged to fly, and hide
 himself to avoid death. He returned how-
 ever, and was received by his army, who suf-
 fered him to resume a shadow of command,
 and by a kind of compact between them, the
 general's safety was the price of the soldiers
 licentiousness. But even that shameful agree-
 ment did not subsist long. Trebellius, was
 forced to fly again, to cross the sea, and seek
 shelter with Vitellius. That army had no
 great share in the civil war, but its name gave
 a credit to the party; and Vitellius, finding
 neither provinces nor troops left behind, but
 what were friends, formed his plan to carry
 his design into execution, and by dint of arms
 establish his authority in the centre of the
 empire.

Contrast
 between
 the ardour
 of the
 troops, and
 Vitellius's
 indolence.

The ardour of the troops spurred him on to
 dispatch, for nothing could be more different
 than Vitellius and his army. The soldiers,
 with loud cries, demanded to be armed, whilst
 the Gauls were struck with a panic, and Spain
 still hesitated what cause to espouse. The ri-
 gours of winter were no obstacle to them. Ene-
 mies to all delay, they wanted to be instantly
 led

* Trebellius fuga ac latebris vitata exercitus ira, indecorus
 atque humilis, precario mox præfuit: ac velut pacti exerci-
 tus licentiam, dux salutem. *Tac. Agr.*

led on to attack Italy, and take possession of Rome. They said, that diligence was of infinite consequence in all civil discords, and that it was better to act than deliberate. On the other hand, Vitellius was buried in indolence. To live in an idle luxury, and have his table profusely covered, was, in his opinion, enjoying empire. Weltering in his fat, and every day drunk by noon, he absolutely neglected all kind of business: but his bad example did not affect the soldiers, whose zeal was as ardent, as if an alert emperor had encouraged them by the strongest exhortations. So that when I said Vitellius formed his plan of war, I would be understood to mean, that his chief officers did it for him.

It was resolved, therefore, that two divisions of the army, the one consisting of forty, the other of thirty thousand men, should go before, under the command of Valens and Cæcina, and that the emperor should follow them with still greater forces. Valens was ordered to make the Gauls declare for Vitellius, or to lay their country waste if they refused, and to enter Italy by the way of the * Cottian Alps. Cæcina was to go a shorter way, and cross the † Pænine Alps. The moment those resolutions were known, the soldiers pressed strongly for orders to march; nor could any time have been lost, since they were actually on the road when they received the news of Galba's death, who, as I have said, was killed the fifteenth of January.

Tacitus

* Torpebat Vitellius, & fortunam Principatus inertī luxu ac prodigis epulis præsumebat, medio diei temulentus, & sagina gravis. Tac.

Plan of
war form-
ed by Vi-
tellius's
generals.
Towards
mount Cæ-
nis.
Towards
great St.
Bernard.

A.R. 820. Tacitus records, as a good omen, the appearance of an eagle at the head of Valens's army, when setting out, and which accompanied it for some time. If any thing be worthy observation in this story, true or false, it is the superstitious credulity of the historian.

A. C. 69.
Valens's
march to
the Cottian
Alps.
Tac. Hist.
l. 62.

Valens crossed the territory of Treves without precaution or danger, the people there being well affected to Vitellius; but at Divodurum, now Metz, though well received, the soldiers were on a sudden seized with an unaccountable panic: they immediately ran to arms, not to plunder the town, but to massacre the inhabitants, and that without any motive or pretence, but out of downright rage and frenzy. The cause being unknown, it was the more difficult to apply a remedy. At length the soldiers were appeased by the entreaties of their commanders, and the city saved from total ruin, though not till it had cost four thousand men their lives. So dreadful an example filled the Gauls with such terror and consternation, that wherever the army passed, whole towns and cities came out to meet them with their magistrates, the women and children prostrating themselves on the ground before them; and in short, doing all that the weak can to move the compassion of the angry strong.

Valens was in the country of the Leuci, now the Diocese of Toul, when he received the news of Galba's death, and Otho's promotion to the empire. This change made little impression on the soldiers, to whom it was indifferent whether they were to fight Otho or Galba.

Galba. However it * determined the Gauls. A.R. 820.
 Otho and Vitellius were equal by odious to them, A. C. 69.
 but Vitellius was dreadful, and that motive
 turned the scale.

After that the army crossed the territories of
 Langres, in the same interest. The troops
 were well received there, and behaved with
 good order and modesty. But it was a short-
 lived joy. In the country were eight cohorts
 of Batavians, destined to follow the fourteenth
 legion as auxiliaries, but had separated on ac-
 count of the disturbances that preceded Nero's
 death. They were returning to Britain whilst
 the fourteenth legion was in Dalmatia. Valens, Tac. Hist.
 who found those cohorts at Langres, having II. 11, § 27.
 joined them to his army, the Batavians qua-
 relled with the legionaries; and the other sol-
 diers taking part, some with one side, and
 others with the other, a general battle was very
 near ensuing. Valens was forced to exert the
 authority of commander, and by putting to
 death a few Batavians, reminded others of
 what they seemed to have almost forgot, the
 respect and obedience due to the majesty of the
 empire.

He sought in vain a pretence to attack the
 Eduans. He demanded money and arms from
 them, which they not only supplied him with,
 but likewise made him a present of provisions.
 Fear was what made them act in this manner.
 The people of Lyons did the same, but wil-
 lingly and out of affection. Their hatred to
 Galba had long since determined them in fa-
 vour of Vitellius. Valens found at Lyons the
 Italic

* *Gallis cunctatio exempla: & in Othonem ac Vitellium
 odium par, ex Vitellio et metus. Tac.*

A.R. 820. Italic legion, and a body of horse, which we should call, according to our way of expressing ourselves, the Turin * regiment, and took them with him. Tacitus observes how like a courtier the general acted on this occasion. The Italic legion was commanded by Manlius, who had deserved well from Vitellius's party. Valens†, who probably was jealous of him, undermined him by private accusations, whilst at the same time, to prevent his distrust, he praised him highly in public. The artifice took effect, and Vitellius set no value on an officer, to whom he already had obligations, and who could be still of farther service to him.

I have observed elsewhere‡, that the cities of Lyons and Vienne were rivals, and looked on each other with a jealous eye. The affection of the Lyonnese for Nero, had made the Viennese as zealous for Galba. In consequence of that enmity, they had fought several skirmishes, and laid waste each other's lands with such animosity, as plainly shewed they were spurred on by some other motive than the bare interest of Galba, or of Nero. Galba becoming master, punished Lyons, and rewarded Vienne: a new cause for reciprocal hatred, still more enflamed by their vicinity. The Lyonnese thought Valens's arrival with a powerful army, the most favourable opportunity they could wish for to satisfy their revenge. They endeavoured to communicate to the troops
all

† Secretis eum criminationibus infamaverat Fabius ignarum, &c, quo incautius deciperetur, palam laudatum. Tac.

‡ Hist. of the Rom. Rep. T. xv. p. 60.

all the hatred their own minds were tainted ^{A.R. 820.} with, and succeeded so well, that the soldiers ^{A.C. 69.} were bent on sacking Vienne, and laying it even with the ground, and that their commanders did not think it in their power to curb their fury. The inhabitants of Vienne greatly alarmed, had recourse to supplications, throwing themselves at the soldiers feet, and with tears imploring their mercy. At the same time Valens gave them three hundred sesterces a man. That made them somewhat more tractable: the antiquity and splendour of the colony of Vienne, then made some impression on them, and they seemed disposed to listen to their general's remonstrances. The Vienne were however disarmed, and almost ruined themselves in presents and supplies of every thing for the use of the troops, though they thought themselves well off to escape even at that price. The common report was, that they had purchased Valens's protection with a large sum of money: and it seems probable. That * officer, who had long been but in bad circumstances, growing rich on a sudden, could not well conceal his change of fortune. Indigence had only whetted his passions, to which when rich, he gave an entire loose: after struggling with poverty in his youth, he became prodigal in his old age.

He marched slowly cross the country of the Allobrogi and Vocontians †, making a shameful

* *Is diu sordidus, repente dives, mutationem fortunæ male tegebat, accensis egestate longa cupidinibus immoderatus, & inopi juventa senex prodigus. Tac.*

† The chief towns of the Vocontians were Vaison, Luc, and Die.

A. R. 820. ful traffic of his marches and halts with the
 A. C. 69. proprietors of the land that lay in his way;
 and behaved in so tyrannical a manner, that
 he was going to set fire to the town of Luc*,
 in the territory of the Vocontians, if the sum
 he demanded had not been immediately brought
 him. Where no money was to be had, the
 honour of their wives and daughters was what
 he exacted from the people, at the price of
 his clemency. In that manner he reached the
 foot of the Alps.

Cæcina's
 march.
 Disaster of
 the Helve-
 tic nation.
Tac. Hist.
 1. 97.

Cæcina took his rout through the country of
 the Helvetians, who then retained hardly any
 thing more than the bare name of the courage
 and bravery of their ancestors. They were
 ignorant of Galba's death, and therefore re-
 fused to submit to Vitellius. Besides, an inci-
 dent of no great consequence bred a quarrel
 between them and the Roman soldiers; and
 Cæcina, fond of plunder and bloodshed, was
 glad to improve it into a war. The Helve-
 tians finding themselves warmly attacked, as-
 sembled their forces: but unaccustomed to
 fight, not knowing their ranks, nor how to
 make use of their arms, they were soon cut to
 pieces, their lands laid waste, and their capital,
 called Avenche, threatened with a siege. Not
 being able to resist, they submitted to the con-
 queror, who caused the head of Julius Alpi-
 nus, one of their chiefs, to be struck off, and
 reserved the fate of the rest to be determined
 by Vitellius.

The

* This town, built on the [Drome, has been laid under
 water for many ages. A village of the same name has been
 since built near it.

The Helvetian deputies found the emperor ^{A.R. 820.} and legions extremely prejudiced against them. ^{A.C. 69.} The soldiers demanded the utter extirpation of that nation, and held up their fists and naked swords at the deputies. Vitellius himself spared neither reproaches nor menaces. The eloquence of Claudius Cossius, speaker * of the deputation, was what saved his country. Trembling, disconcerted, and shedding tears, he made a speech suitable to his grief and anxiety, and moved the multitude, ever ready to run from one extreme to another, and to be as soon touched with pity as carried to the greatest violences. The soldiers, thus charged, joined their tears to those of the supplicants, and insisting on clemency still more strongly than they had before on rigour, prevailed on Vitellius to pardon the Helvetians.

Cæcina staid in the country waiting the emperor's decision and orders. Being informed ^{Cæcina crosses the} what they were, just as he was preparing to ^{Pænine Alps.} cross the Alps, he learned that a body of horse, which had formerly served under Vitellius in Africa, and which Nero had ordered back to Italy for the project I have mentioned of an expedition into Egypt, espoused the cause of their old general, and had sworn allegiance to him. Those troops were then near the Po; and not content to side with Vitellius themselves, had determined four important cities to declare

* Claudius Cossus, unus ex legatis, notæ facundiæ, sed dicendi artem apta trepitatione temperans, atque eo validior, militis animum mitigavit: ut est mos vulgo, mutabili subitis, & tam prono in misericordiam, quam immodicum sævitia fuerat. Effusus lacrimis, & meliora constantius postulando, impunitatem salutemque civitati impetravera. Tac.

A. R. 820. declare for him, Milan, Novara, Yvrées and
 A. C. 69. Verceil. Cæcina overjoyed at so fine a beginning, and readily conceiving that a body, which at most did not consist of above a thousand horse, could not be able to keep so large an extent of country, immediately dispatched a considerable detachment of horse and foot, whilst himself with the main army, crossed the Pænine Alps still covered with snow.

Otho and
 Vitellius
 sound, and
 lay snares
 for each
 other.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 74.

Whilst Vitellius was making such formidable preparations for war, he often received letters from Otho, inviting him to think of peace, offering him money, an honourable rank, and whatever place he should pitch upon himself to retire to, there to spend his days in ease and plenty. Vitellius answered in the same stile: and this ridiculous and unbecoming commerce lasted some time on both sides: till at last invectives succeeded flattery and compliments, and their letters were full of upbraidings of each other's infamous deeds, in which both said nothing but truth.

Otho was likewise desirous to sound the disposition of his enemies troops, to which end he got the senate to depute some of their members towards the two German armies. The deputies remained with Vitellius, into whose service they entered so readily, that they did not even save appearances. The officers of the guards, whom Otho had taken care to send at the same time, as if to do honour to the deputies, and compose their train, were sent back before they could form any intimacies or connections with the legions. Valens gave them letters from the German armies to the prætorian and city cohorts, wherein the strength of Vitellius's party was blazoned

blazoned out; an offer was made to live in harmony and good intelligence with them; and their giving Otho the empire, of which Vitellius was first in possession, was complained of. Promises and menaces were likewise used to shake their fidelity, by representing how unequal their forces were for war, and at the same time assuring them they should lose nothing by peace. But the prætorians were too strongly attached to Otho to be moved.

Secret snares succeeded more open attempts to corrupt. Both Vitellius and Otho sent assassins to murder each other. Those employed by Vitellius easily concealed themselves in Rome, but Otho's emissaries were soon discovered. New faces could not but betray themselves in a camp where every one knew each other.

Vitellius's mother, wife and children, were then in Rome. He wrote to Salvius Titianus, Otho's brother, that his and his son's heads should answer for whatever ill happened to them. The * two families were preserved. But the glory of clemency was on Vitellius's side; for Otho's mildness may be ascribed to fear, which could not be the conqueror's case.

Hitherto I have spoken only of the strength of Vitellius's party. Otho was not less well supported. Besides Italy, the prætorian and city cohorts, he had on his side the legions of Dalmatia, Pannonia and Mæsia, who swore fidelity and obedience to him. That was his real and solid strength. The provinces beyond sea, with all the East, Egypt and Africa had likewise

* Et stetit utraque domus: sub Othone, incertum an metu. Vitellius victor clementiæ gloriâ tulit. *Ted.*

A. R. 820. likewise taken the oath to him. But it was not
 A. C. 69. out of affection for his person: the name of Rome and the majesty of the senate had great weight and influence in those remote provinces, where every one was naturally disposed to acknowledge for emperor whoever was acknowledged such in Rome. Besides, Otho was the first whose promotion was notified to them, and in whose favour they were consequently pre-engaged.

Vitellius too reckoned in his party, provinces which had been determined in his favour by the circumstances of things more than any real attachment. Aquitania, Spain, and Narbonne, declared for him only out of fear: nay, Spain at first declared for Otho and Cluvius Rufus, Proconsul of that province, was commended for it by a public declaration of Otho's in Rome, but a moment before he was known to have changed sides. Aquitania underwent the same change. On the whole, the forces of Otho and Vitellius were pretty equal, and the success of either party very dubious.

Otho's
 plan of
 war.
Tac. Hist.
 I. 87.

Otho's plan of war was as follows. As he knew the passes over the Alps were already occupied by Vitellius's troops, he resolved to attack Narbonnese Gaul by sea, and to that purpose fitted out a fleet, manned with his most zealous and best affected troops, such as the remains of the marine legion, so cruelly treated by Galba, together with the city cohorts and a detachment of prætorians, on whose fidelity Otho depended so much, that he considered them as checks upon even their own commanders, who were two first captains of legions, and a tribune, broke by Galba, but restored by him.

They

They had the command of the troops. *Oscus*, A. R. 820. a freeman, had the management of the ships; A. C. 62. an employment far above his station : but *Otho* thought he could trust such a man much better than one of higher birth and rank.

Himself, heading his land army, prepared to march against *Vitellius's* lieutenants. He chose for commanders under him the greatest generals that Rome then had : *Suetonius Paulinus*, whose exploits we have already spoken of; *Marius Celsus*, an able and active warrior; *Annius Gallus*, an experienced officer; though he did not entirely depend on their attachment to him, but placed all his confidence in *Licinius Proculus*, one of the two prætorian prefects, an excellent * officer for a guard, but unexperienced in war : a cunning subtle calumniator, who knew how to give a bad turn to the best deeds and qualifications of others, and dexterously fill the prince's mind with distrusts and fears of those who, together with frankness and modesty, possessed superior talents.

Before *Otho* set out, fearing his absence might occasion disturbances in Rome, he thought proper to take some precautions, in which he did not always consult the strictest rules of justice. *Dolabella* gave him umbrage; not that he had ever shewn any tendency towards ambition or intrigues, but on account of the name he bore, one of the most illustrious of the ancient nobility, of his being related to *Galba*,
and

* *Is urbanæ militiæ impiger, bellorum insolens, auctoritatem Paulini; vigorem Celsi, maturitatem Galli, ut cuique erat, criminando, quod facillimum factu est, pravus & callus, bonos & modestos anteibat. Tac.*

A.R. 820. and because he had been one of the persons
 A. C. 69. proposed to be adopted by that emperor. Otho
 thought those sufficient reasons to justify his
 securing Dolabella's person. He confined him
 to Aquinum *, and there set a guard over him.
 For the same reasons he carried with him several
 of the magistrates, and many of those who
 were of consular dignity, not to assist him with
 their swords or counsels, but to have them under
 his hand, and in his power. Of that number
 was L. Vitellius, whom he distinguished in no
 shape from the rest, neither treating him as an
 emperor's brother, nor as brother to his enemy.

Trouble
 and uneasiness
 in
 Rome at
 the approach
 of
 war.

Preparations for war were quite a novelty in
 Rome. Since the calm restored by Augustus,
 the Roman people had known none but distant
 wars, the uneasiness as well as honour of which,
 interested only the head of the empire. The
 evils of a tyrannical peace were all they had
 felt under Tiberius and Caligula. Scribonianus
 Camillus's attempt against Claudius, was
 stifled in its birth before any could be alarmed
 by it. Nero was destroyed by the bare news
 of the revolt of two provinces, more than by
 arms. Whereas they now saw legions marching,
 fleets fitting out, and, which they had never
 before heard of, the prætorian and city cohorts
 going to war.

Such was the general uneasiness and disturbance
 in Rome, that no one order of citizens
 was exempt from it †. The heads of the senate

* Aquino, in the Terra di layore in the kingdom of Naples.

† Nullus ordo metu aut periculo vacuus. Primores
 Senatus, ætate invalidi, & longa pace desidēs, segnis &
 obli-

nate, grown old, and by a long series of peace, ^{A. R. 890.} accustomed to a quiet life; the nobility enervated, and having forgot the art of war; the ^{A. C. 69.} knights quite unexperienced, having never made a campaign; all trembled and betrayed their fear, even when they strove most to conceal it. Some however were of a quite different way of thinking. War awaked their ambition; but it was an ill-judged ambition, the object of it being to make a shew by their expences. They provided themselves with rich arms, fine horses, and magnificent equipages. The delight of others was a splendid table; for which whatever appertains to luxury, and is proper only to irritate the passions, was provided by way of provisions for the war. Wise men lamented the loss of the public tranquillity, and consulted the interests of the state; whilst flightier minds, thinking of the present only, without considering what might ensue, buoyed themselves up with idle hopes. Tumult and disorder suited many, whose fortunes and credit being lost, dreaded peace, and had no resource but in a general confusion. The multitude, whose narrow views never reach beyond what immediately concerns themselves, began
to

oblita bellorum nobilitas, ignarus militiæ Eques, quanto magis occultare ac abdere pavorem nitebantur, manifestius pavidi. Nec deerant e contrario, cui ambitione stolidi, conspicua arma, insignes equos, quidam luxurioso apparatus conviviorum et irritamenta libidinum, ut instrumenta belli, mercarentur. Sapientibus quietis et Reipublicæ cura: levisimus quisque et futuri improvidus, spe vana tumens. Multi afflicta fide in pace, ac turbatis rebus alacres, et per incertatutissimi. Sed vulgus et . . . communium curarum expertus populus, sentire paulatim belli mala, conversa in militum usum omni pecunia, intentis alimentorum pretiis. Tec,

A. R. 920. to feel the consequences of war, by the scar-
 A. C. 69. city of money and dearness of provisions. No-
 thing of that kind had been felt in Vindex's
 insurrection, which was terminated within the
 province where it began, between the German
 legions and the Gauls.

Otho's
 haste to
 set out.

Otho did all that was in his power to remedy
 those evils by coming to a speedy decision. He
 could not bear delays, which he said had been
 the ruin of Nero; and Cæcina's diligence, in
 having already passed the Alps, spurred him
 on still more to hasten his departure and take
 the field.

He takes
 leave of the
 senate, and
 does an act
 of goodness
 and justice.

The fourteenth of March, he convened the
 senate to recommend the republic to their care.
 At the same time, being desirous to please by
 an act of goodness and justice, he granted to
 such as were returned from exile, and whose
 estates had been forfeited, what still remained
 unpaid to the exchequer of the nine tenths of
 Nero's liberalities reclaimed by Galba. The
 gift was well bestowed, and sounded great, but
 the produce of it was trifling, on account of the
 strict searches already made by the officers of
 the exchequer, who had left but few outstand-
 ing arrears.

He ha-
 rangues the
 people.
 Servile
 adulation
 of the mul-
 titude.

Otho harangued the people too, and in his
 speech vaunted the dignity of the capital, and
 the august suffrages of the whole senate in his
 favour. He spoke with modesty of Vitellius's
 partizans, whom he taxed rather with prejudice
 and ignorance, than ill will and audaciousness:
 and as to Vitellius, he said not a word of him.
 Tacitus doubts whether such great circumspec-
 tion ought to be imputed to Otho himself, or
 to the person who composed his speeches, which

was

was generally thought to be Galerius Trachalus, a celebrated orator, of whom I have spoken elsewhere. The * applauses of a multitude, accustomed to flatter, were as great, as they were false and deceitful. Nothing more could have been done, no stronger affection shewn, had the dictator Cæsar, or the emperor Augustus been setting out for war : to so low a state had habitual servitude reduced the Roman people, now a nation of mere slaves, consulting nothing but their own private ends, and not valuing in the least what became of the public welfare and glory. Otho appointed his brother Salvius Titianus to officiate for him in the city, and govern the empire in his absence.

He sent forward a considerable body of troops composed of five prætorian cohorts of the first legion, and some horse. To them he added two thousand gladiators, a reinforcement not over-honourable to the party that made use of it, but which, however, the most rigid generals had employed in civil wars. The command of those troops was given to Annius Gallus and Vestricius Spurrinna, who were ordered to dispute the passage of the Po, the enemy having already passed the Alps. Otho followed them himself at a small distance, with the rest of the prætorian cohorts, and all the forces he had at hand. He did not wait the arrival of four legions who were coming from Dalmatia

* *Clamor vocesque vulgi, ex more adalandi, nimis et falsæ. Quasi dictatorem Cæsarem, aut Imperatorem Augustum prosequerentur, ita studiis votisque certabant: nec metu aut amore, sed ex libidine servitii: ut in familiis, priuata cuique stimulatio, et vile jam decus publicum.* Tac.

A. R. 620. Dalmatia and Panonnia, three of which were
 A. C. 69. old corps; particularly the fourteenth legion had gained great glory in Britain under Suetonius Paulinus, and for that very reason had been pitched upon by Nero for the expedition he was meditating just before his death: a preference by which the courage of those soldiers was greatly elated, and the affection they had conceived for Nero, reflected on Otho. Those four legions, preceded by a detachment of two thousand men, were on their march, but proceeded so slowly, that the dispute was ended before they arrived.

He suffers great fatigue. Otho on *leaving Rome † seemed to have left behind him all relish for luxury and effeminacy. Armed with an iron cuirass, he marched on foot at the head of the troops, covered with dust, neglecting his person, and quite the reverse of what, till then, he had seemed to be. He knew how to suit himself to circumstances, and what his interest required.

Exploits of Otho's fleet. Fortune seemed to favour Otho at first, and to give him pleasing hopes. His fleet, though very badly managed, reduced to obedience the whole

* *Nec illi segne aut luxu corruptum iter: sed lorica ferrea usus est, ante signa pedester, horridus, incomptus, famæque dissimilis.* Tac.

† The character Tacitus here gives of Otho is very different from Juvenal's, when he reproaches him with being effeminate and luxurious even in his preparations for a civil war, a looking-glass being part of his equipage.

Res memoranda novis annalibus, atque recenti Historia, speculum civilis sarcina belli.

Juven. Sat. II. v. 112.

I think the authority of the satyrist not to be compared with that of the historian.

whole coast of Liguria and Narbonnese Gaul. A. R. 820. It was commanded, as I have said, by a tribune A. C. 69. and two centurions. The soldiers, badly disciplined, put their tribune in irons. One of the two centurions had no manner of authority; and the other, called Suedius Clemens, rather paid his court to, than commanded them. But, though fitter to corrupt than to maintain discipline, he wanted neither bravery, nor an ardent desire to distinguish himself.

A fleet wherein the soldiers were masters, could not fail to commit strange disorders: They made several descents on the Ligurian shore, and behaved in such a manner, that none would have taken them for national troops coasting their own country. They acted like enemies, and cruel ones too; plundering, laying waste, and putting all to fire and sword. The mischief they committed was the greater, as none suspected, or were guarded against them. The * country was covered with the rich produce of the earth; the houses open; the inhabitants with their wives and children, came out to meet the soldiers, with all the security peace can inspire, but met with all the calamities of war. No part was more severely treated than the * Maritime Alps, which Marius Maturus, intendant of that country, attempted to defend with what mountaineers he could collect together. But † regular troops soon

* Pleni agri, apertæ domus: occursantes domini juxta conjuges ac liberos securitate pacis et belli male circumveniebantur. Tac.

† A small province extending from the sea to mount Viso, where the Po rises.

‡ Primo impetu cæsi disjectique montani, ut quibus temere collectis, non castra, non ducem noscitantibus, neque in victoria decus esset, neque in fuga flagitium. Tac.

A. R. 320. soon dispersed a multitude of barbarians, who
 A. C. 69. had no notion of discipline, and were as insensible of the glory of conquering, as of the shame of flying. No booty could be expected from a poor nation, nor even prisoners from so alert a people, who would skip up to the top of their mountains in an instant. The victors fell upon the city, then called Albium Intemelium, now Vintimille, where they reeked their vengeance on the unfortunate inhabitants.

Their injustice and cruelty, already odious in themselves, became still more so by the brave example of a Ligurian woman, who had concealed her son. The soldiers, thinking she had hid her gold with him, endeavoured by torturing her to force that unhappy mother to discover where her son was. Shewing them her breasts, she told them, they must seek in that asylum, him whom their rage so barbarously pursued: nor * could the severest punishments inflicted on her, even till she died under them, extort any other than that resolute answer.

Tac. Agr.
 I. 7.

Agricola's mother, who was then at a seat she had in Liguria, was killed by those inhuman wretches.

Tac. Hist.
 II. 27.

The Narbonnese Gauls, alarmed at the approach of Otho's fleet, requested succours from Valens, who was still on their side of the Alps. He sent them a numerous detachment of horse and foot, between whom, and Otho's people, who landed, two smart battles were fought immediately after one another, and quite on the sea shore. Vitellius's party was worsted in

* *Nec ullis deinde terroribus, aut morte, constantiam vocis egregia amutavit. Tac.*

in both engagements, but it cost the victors A.R. 820.
 much blood; and by a kind of tacit agreement A. C. 69.
 both sides reciprocally withdrew and retired,
 the conquered to Antibes, and Otho's people
 to Albingaunum, now Albinga, on the Genoese
 coast.

The news of the success Otho's fleet had met
 with, kept the islands of Corsica and Sardinia
 in his interest. Some disturbances however
 happened in Corsica, occasioned by the rash-
 ness of the intendant Decimus Pacarius, a man
 of an uneasy turbulent disposition, who, to shew
 his zeal for Vitellius, was for backing him with
 the poor assistance, the little island of which
 he had the government, could afford. He suf-
 fered the penalty of his foolish enterprize; for
 the Corsicans, fatigued and harrassed by the
 levies and military exercises to which he sub-
 jected them, watched his time of bathing, and
 killed him in the bath. The murderers carried
 his head to Otho; * were neither rewarded by
 him, for whom they committed the crime, nor
 punished by Vitellius when conqueror. Greater
 crimes and more important objects made that
 be forgotten.

Otho's land forces gained still greater ad-
 vantages than those we have just related of his
 fleet. The first beginning indeed did not fa-
 vour him; I mean a body of horse on the Po,
 who declared for Vitellius. That cavalry, Otho's
land forces
and Vitel-
lius's begin-
to skir-
mish.
 backed by a strong detachment sent by Cæcina, Tac. Hist.
II. 17.
 had, without difficulty brought over all that
 country between the Po and the Alps: not
 that

† Neque eos aut Otho præmio affectit, aut punivit Vitel-
 lius, in multa colluvie rerum majoribus flagitiis permixtos.
Tac.

A. R. 820. that * its inhabitants were fond of Vitellius,
 A. C. 69. nor did they interest themselves for Otho, but quite enervated by a long peace, it was equal to them which of the two was their master.

All this was done before Otho's troops arrived; and they too suffered some small repulse at first. A cohort of Pannonians were made prisoners near Cremona: a hundred horse and a thousand marines, had the same fate between Placentia and *Ticinum*, now called Pavia. The Batavians and Germans detached by Cæcina, animated by that success, passed the Po over against Placentia, and carried off some stragglers; and so unexpected an attack spreading the alarm, gave rise to a report that Cæcina was arrived with his whole army.

Spurinna was in Placentia with three prætorian cohorts and a thousand veterans. Like a prudent and experienced officer, he gave no credit to the false reports spread by a parcel of terrified creatures, for he was sensible he had only a garrison, and not an army with him; and that though his forces might be sufficient to defend the place, they would not do to take the field. He therefore resolved to shut himself up within the walls of Placentia. The soldiers, who had never seen war, and who for that very reason were the more intractable, ran to arms, snatched up the standards, and presented the points of their swords to Spurinna, scorning to hear the centurions and tribunes commend the prudence of their chief, who endeavoured

* Nullo apud quemquam Othonis favore, nec quia Vitellium mallent: sed longa pax ad omne servitium tregerat. faciles occupantibus, et melioribus incuriosos. Tac.

deavoured to check them. They even accused ^{A. R. 820.} them of treason and intelligence with Cæcina. ^{A. C. 69.} Spurrinna, * forced to yield to the rashness of his troops, thought it was most prudent to seem to enter into their ways of thinking in order to preserve his authority, and bring them back to their duty whenever their seditious humour should be over. What he foresaw, happened.

When in the field, night drawing on, re-trenchments were of course to be made. That work, quite new to the prætorians, began to cool their courage. The most sensible of them then opened their eyes, saw their error, and represented to the rest, to what danger they should be exposed, if in an open country so small a number as they were, should be surrounded by Cæcina's whole army. Their reflections were very just, and the officers backing them, all agreed their general judged wisely in choosing a strong and well fortified colony for the seat of war. At last Spurrinna ventured to speak to them without disguise; not to upbraid them with their fault, but to make them sensible of his reasons. He succeeded: and leaving only a few scouts to bring intelligence of the enemy, marched back to Placentia, with the rest of his troops, now become more tractable and obedient. He repaired and strengthened the fortifications of that place, provided a sufficient quantity of arms, and every thing necessary to sustain a siege, and restored a proper discipline and subordination among his

* Fit temeritatis alienæ comes Spurrinna, primo coactus, mox velle se simulans, quo plus auctoritatis inesset consiliis, si seditio mitesceret, Tac.

A. R. 820. his troops, the only advantage wanting to
A. C. 69. Otho's party, in which there was courage and
bravery enough.

Ostenta-
tion of Cæ-
cina and
his wife.
Tac. Hist.
II. 20.

In the mean time Cæcina drew near, keep-
ing his troops as much within bounds, since
their entrance into Italy, as he had permitted
them to be licentious before. The singular
accoutrement and ostentation of the general,
displeased and shocked the inhabitants of all
the countries through which he passed. Those
people, who wore the toga, were surprized to
see a Roman general with a mantle of various
colours, and the rest of * his dress, borrowed
from the fashions of the barbarians. His wife
Salonina † was with him, mounted on a horse
magnificently caparisoned; and that ostenta-
tion which in fact hurt nobody, excited how-
ever a general indignation. It is a natural fail-
ing in all men to look with envy on a recent
fortune, and even though the strictest modesty
be observed, not to be able to forgive the ele-
vation of those who were their equals.

He be-
siegues Pla-
centia to no
purpose,
and retires
to Cre-
mona.

Cæcina, having passed the Po, first tried to
gain over his adversaries by fair words and great
promises, to which they returned the same.
After making use on both sides of the specious
names of Peace and Concord, and with as
much deceit in one party as in the other, war
was at last to determine the difference; and
Cæcina

* Breeches, after the manner of the Gauls and Germans.

† *Uxorem ejus Saloninam, quamquam in nullius injuriam. Insigni equo ostroque veheretur, tamquam læsi gravabantur: insito * mortalibus natura, recentem aliorum felicitatem ægris oculis introspicere, modumque fortunæ a nullis magis exi- gere, quam quos in æquo videre. Tac.*

* The text says *insita*. I follow Lipsius's conjecture.

Cæcina affecting every thing that could inspire terror, prepared to besiege Placentia. * Being sensible of what consequence the success of a first enterprize is, and how far it influences over all subsequent ones, not in the least doubting the superiority of his forces, he attempted to storm the place, without taking any of those precautions which the art of war has invented to cover the besiegers. The soldiers, as presumptuous as their leader, having filled themselves with victuals and drink, attacked the walls. They met with a much warmer reception than they expected, and were repulsed with great loss. In this first fray was burnt a vast and magnificent amphitheatre built in the suburbs, and of which the inhabitants of the city bitterly lamented the loss, when they had no greater dangers to apprehend.

The night was spent in mutual preparations for an attack in form, and a stout resistance. Vitellius's partizans prepared hurdles, galleries, and battering rams, and Otho's got ready long poles, with enormous masses of stone, lead, and other metals, to pierce through and break the works of the assailants, and crush those that should be under them. Each † animated his companions in the strongest manner, saying, what an honour it would be to conquer,

* Gnarus, ut initia provenissent, famam in cetera foré.
Tac.

† Utrimque pudor, utrimque gloria; et diversæ exhortationes, hinc legionum et Germanici exercitus robur, inde urbanæ militiæ et prætoriarum cohortium decus, attollentium. Illi, ut segnem ac desidem, et circo ac theatris corruptis militem, hi, peregrinum et externum increpabant. Simul Othonem ac Vitellium celebrantes culpantesque, uberionibus inter se probris quam laudibus stimulabantur. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. quer, and how shameful to be worsted. On
 A. C. 69. one side, the invincible strength of the Germanic legions was vaunted, and on the other, the glory and pre-eminence of the prætorian cohorts, the emperor's own guard. The legionaries treated the prætorians with the utmost contempt, as a raw militia bred up in idleness, and corrupted by the circus and theatres; whilst they in their turn called their adversaries strangers whom Rome did not acknowledge. The names of Otho and Vitellius were often mentioned, but both sides had a much more ample field to accuse him against whom they made war, than to praise him for whom they fought.

The day had scarcely began to dawn, when the walls were covered with defenders, and the plain filled with shining arms. The legions closing their ranks, and the auxiliary troops more extended, and covering a larger space of ground, divided the attack between them. The latter, consisting of Germans, threw darts and stones against the strongest and best guarded places; and wherever any part of the walls seemed either to be neglected or in bad order, those barbarians ran up to it without any precaution, and, as was their custom, half naked, not covering themselves with their shields, but with horrid shouts, brandishing them out of a vain ostentation. The prætorians had infinite advantages over them, they beat them down with showers of arrows, and killed numbers, without being hardly hurt themselves. Nor did they defend themselves less well against the legionaries, who, sheltered under their galleries, endeavoured to mine the walls. The vast
 stones,

stones, of which the besieged had plenty, falling from a great height on the roofs of the galleries, soon broke them to pieces, put all in disorder, and rendered that attack abortive. The legionaries crushed to death, and the auxiliaries annoyed by the arrows, retreated with shame, after losing the reputation they had brought with them. Cæcina raised the siege after two fruitless assaults, and retired to Cremona.

Spurinna being informed of the road the enemy had taken, immediately dispatched a courier to Annius Gallus, letting him know that the siege was raised, and what rout Cæcina had taken. Gallus was on the way, marching to succour Placentia with the first legion. On the news received from Spurinna, the legion was for marching after the enemy, and their desire to fight was so violent, that they even grew seditious. However, Gallus with great difficulty got the better, and stopped at Bedriac, a village * between Cremona and Verona, famous in history for two battles fought there within a month by Romans against Romans.

2

About

* Cluvier justly observes, that this is a very vague position. The distance between Verona and Cremona is considerable, and Bedriac ought to have been much nearer the latter than the former of those cities. According to him, Tacitus would have expressed himself much better, had he placed Bedriac between Cremona and Mantua. But though Cluvier very properly points out an inaccuracy in the Roman historian, he has not so well determined the true situation of Bedriac, which he supposes to have been the present *Caneto*, a large village on the left of the Oglio; whereas Bedriac must have been on the right hand side of that river. M. D'Anville, to whose judgment I readily submit, thinks Bedriac the place now called *Cividale*.

A.R. 820. About the same time Martius Macer, who
 A. C. 69. commanded the two thousand gladiators, of whom I have spoken, on a sudden passed the Po with them near Cremona; and falling on a body of Cæcina's auxiliaries, cut part of them to pieces, and put the rest to flight. But he did not pursue his advantage, for fear the enemies, recovering themselves, might call in fresh succours, and soon be superior to him.

Otho's
troops dis-
trust their
leaders.

His prudent precaution • made the troops of Otho's party, ever ready to put a bad construction on the conduct of their leaders, suspect his. The greatest cowards were, as always happens, the most insolent: and in their speeches attacked not only Macer, but the chief generals of the army, Annius Gallus, Suetonius Paulinus, and Marius Celsus. The murderers of Galba were above all the most turbulent and noisy. Stung by remorse of conscience, and the dread of a just punishment, they sought for safety in tumult and confusion. They sowed the seeds of discord, either by promoting sedition openly, or by conveying private intelligence to Otho. Whilst that prince, ready to lend an ear to the reports of the meanest creatures, because he dreaded honest men, knew not what to resolve on; ever fickle and fluctuating

* *Suspectum id Othonianis fecit, omnia ducum facta prave aestimantibus. Certatim ut quisque animo ignavus, procax ore, Annium Gallum, et Suetonium Paulinum, et Marium Celsum . . . variis criminibus incessebant. Acerrima seditionum ac discordiæ incitamenta, interfectores, Galbæ, scelere ac metu vecordes, miscere cuncta, modo occultis ad Othonem litteris. Qui humilimo cuique credulus, bonos metuens, trepidabat, rebus prosperis incertus, et adversis melior. Tac.*

fluctuating whilst in a prosperous state; and A. D. 69.
 never so wise and prudent as when in adversity. A. C. 69.
 At length he resolved to send for his brother Titianus, and to give him the general command of the army. Before he arrived, Paulinus and Celsus gained a very considerable advantage over the enemy.

Cæcina was piqued at not succeeding in any Great advantages gained by Otho's generals over Cæcina.
 one of his enterprizes, and at finding his arms fall daily into greater disrepute. The raising of the siege of Placentia, the defeat of the auxiliaries, and the skirmishes between both parties, in which his men were almost always worsted, were things that gave him great uneasiness: and fearing lest Valens, who was drawing near, should be more successful, and eclipse his glory, he set about retrieving his honour with more warmth than prudence. With that view he laid a plot for an ambuscade to catch the generals of the adverse party: but they, being apprized of it, turned his artifice against himself, and he fell into the snare he laid for them.

Otho's horse, commanded by Celsus, did wonders, and broke the enemy's ranks. Paulinus with his infantry did not come up time enough to back him. He was * naturally a temporizer; and as the ground where both armies were engaged was pretty rough and uneven, he wanted first to fill up the ditches, and widen the roads, to give his army a more extensive

* Cunctator natura, et cui cauta potius consilia cum ratione, quam prospera ex casu placerent, compleri fossas aperiri campum, pandi aciem jubebat, satis cito incipi victoriam ratus, ubi provisum foret ne vincerentur. Tac.

A. R. 690. tensive front, thinking it would be time enough
 A. C. 69. to begin to conquer after he should have taken all proper precautions to prevent being conquered. By that delay, Cæcina's men got into some vineyards and a little wood, where they had time to recover their spirits, and form their ranks again. From thence they returned to the attack, killed some prætorian horse, whom the heat of victory had carried too far, and wounded king * Epiphanes, who fought valiantly for Otho. Paulinus then falling on with his infantry, crushed the enemy's troops with so much the greater ease, as Cæcina committed a fault in not sending up at once a strong reinforcement, but only one cohort after another, who, as fast as they came, were either routed by the conquerors, or borne down by the torrent of the fugitives,

The very soldiers saw their commander's error, and were highly incensed, thinking treason was at the bottom of it; for which reason they put in irons Julius Gratus, præfect of their camp, as having an understanding with his brother Julius Fronto, who was a tribune in Otho's army, and had likewise been put in arrest for the very same reason.

The terror was so great and general among Vitellius's troops, and such the confusion, occasioned by the mixture of those who fled from battle, with those who came from the camp to succour them, that it was agreed on both sides, Cæcina's army must have been entirely destroyed, if Paulinus had not sounded a retreat.

He

* Ryckius, in his notes on Tacitus, thinks this prince was son of Antiochus of Commagena, of whom Josephus speaks, l. vii. de B. Jud. c. 27,

He alledged in his excuse, that he was apprehensive, if he continued the pursuit, his troops, fatigued by a hard battle, and having no body of reserve to back them in case of danger, would be exposed to too great hardships from what enemies might come fresh out of their camp. But few approved his reasons: the multitude was not satisfied with him, and consequently he was distrusted. On the other hand, the event of that battle was a lesson to the conquered. Without being intimidated by it, they took it as a warning to be more cautious and circumspect for the future. Cæcina's troops were not the only ones admonished by it; and, desirous to clear themselves of the imputation their general laid to their charge, of being the cause of their own defeat, by behaving with an arrogance more like sedition than battle: but Valens's troops too, then arrived at Pavia, learning not to despise the enemy, and bent on retrieving the honour of their party, became more orderly and submissive; for till then the same intractable spirit had reigned among them too, and had excited a furious sedition on the road, of which Valens was very near being the victim. The occasion of it was as follows.

The eight cohorts of Batavians, overtaken by Valens at Langres, and joined to his army, were, as I have said, originally destined to follow the fourteenth legion. In the revolution, by which the empire and mankind were delivered from Nero, the legionaries and Batavians had divided, the former espousing the prince's cause, and the others declaring against him. Nero's fall was a subject of vanity and triumph

Furious sedition in Valens's army.
Tac. Hist.
II. 27.

A.R. 820. triumph to the Batavians. They would not
 A.C. 69. go with the fourteenth legion into Dalmatia,
 but resolved to return to Britain, from whence
 they came. On meeting Valens's army they
 changed their minds, and embraced Vitellius's
 party, to which they carried all their pride and
 haughtiness, boasting incessantly to the legions
 with which they marched, that they had re-
 duced the fourteenth legion, and deprived Nero
 of the empire : in a word, assuming the whole
 honour of the decision of that great quarrel,
 and stiling themselves the arbitrators of the
 fate of princes and event of war. The sol-
 diers of the legions did not at all like their
 boastings ; the general himself was nettled at
 them ; all discipline was broke through by
 their continual wrangles, from which blows,
 and even battles might easily ensue : in short,
 Valens feared lest the Batavians should proceed
 from insolence to infidelity.

Struck with that reflection, Valens laid hold
 on the pretence furnished him by the defeat of
 the troops he had sent to succour Narbonnese
 Gaul against Otho's fleet. Under colour of
 defending Vitellius's allies, but in reality with
 a view to separate a body too powerful when
 united, he ordered a part of the Batavians to
 the Narbonnese. The Batavians were afflicted
 at it, and the legions took it ill, complaining
 that they were deprived of a great support by
 the removal of those excellent troops. " What !
 " said they, those old soldiers, victorious in
 " so many wars, are taken, as it were, from
 " the field of battle, at the very moment when
 " we are drawing near the enemy ! if a single
 " province be preferable to the capital, and to
 " the

“ the welfare of the empire, let us all go to A. R. 820.
 “ Narbonnese Gaul. But if Italy be our main A. C. 69.
 “ object, if that be the term and fruit of our
 “ victory, what can be more senseless, than to
 “ weaken ourselves when we are just entering
 “ there, and to cut off from our body, strong
 “ and healthy members that would be of great
 “ service to us.”

These speeches being spread over all the camp, Valens sent his lictors to put a stop to them, and prevent the growing sedition. But the mutinous, attacking him too, and throwing stones at him, obliged him to fly; they pursued, upbraiding him with the spoils of Gaul, with which he had enriched himself, and the gold he had received from the Viennese; and, imagining he had concealed treasures acquired by their labours, they plundered his baggage, ransacked his tents, and sounded the earth with their spears, whilst their unfortunate general gained time by their avidity, to take shelter with an officer of the horse, where he remained concealed in a slave's dress.

Their fury beginning to abate, Alphænus Varus, præfect of the camp, thought of an expedient to make them sensible how much they stood in need of their chief. To that end he left them entirely to their own conduct, laying aside all that order by which discipline is maintained in an army. He forbid the centurions going their rounds, and the trumpets sounding to tell the watches of the night. So unusual a * calm quite disconcerted the mutineers,

* Igitur torpere cuncti, circumspectare inter se attoniti:
 & id ipsum quod nemo regeret paventes, silentio pæniten-
 tia,

A. R. 820. neers, they remained in a kind of lethargy,
 A. C. 69. looking at each other, not knowing what to do, because no body attempted to direct or command them. They strove to obtain pardon by a modest silence, by every mark of repentance, and at last by prayers and tears. Valens chose that moment to leave his retreat, and appeared before them like an humble suppliant, bathed in tears. The soldiers, who had concluded him dead, were extremely moved and overjoyed at seeing him again, so contrary to their expectations; and, as is usual with the multitude, passing from one extreme to another, loaded him with praises, surrounding him with their eagles and standards, and bore him to his tribunal. Valens behaved with a moderation suitable to the circumstances he was in. He required the death of none; though he could not help complaining of some, for fear an absolute silence might give room to suspect he only concealed his resentment. He was very sensible, that in civil wars soldiers will prescribe laws to their commanders.

Ardour of
 Valens's
 troops to
 join Cæ-
 cina.

The sedition was very near breaking out again, when drawing near Pavia, Valens's army learnt the defeat of Cæcina. Vexed at not having come up in time to be at the battle, the soldiers imputed it to the slowness and perfidy of

tia, postremo precibus ac lacrymis veniam querebant. Ut vero deformis & flens, & præter spem incolumis, Valens processit, gaudium, miseratio, favor; versi in lætitiâ, ut est vulgus utroque immodicum, laudantes gratantesque, circumdatum aquilis signisque in tribunal ferunt. Ille, utili moderatione, non supplicum cujusquam poposcit: ac ne dissimulans suspectior foret, paucos incusavit: gnarus, civilibus bellis plus militibus, quam ducibus licere. Tac.

of their general. But reflection soon changed ^{A.R. 820.} that inconsiderate passion into ardour against ^{A. C. 69.} the enemy. The soldiers would take no rest, but, without waiting for orders, hastened on, hurrying their standard-bearers, whom they often got before, till they overtook Cæcina.

His troops were overjoyed at receiving so considerable a reinforcement, but at the same time feared being despised by them, and taxed with want of courage, because they had been beaten. For which reason, to justify themselves, and flatter the new comers, they extolled their force and strength, complaining that Valens had, by his delays, deprived them of so great an assistance, and left them exposed to all the dangers of the enemy's fresh troops. Though Valens was the oldest commander, and had the most numerous army under him, yet the * soldiers in general preferred Cæcina, whose youth, good mien, and liberality, had gained their hearts, at the same time that his vain boastings blinded their eyes.

Thence arose a strong jealousy between the ^{Jealousy} two commanders. Cæcina despised his col- ^{between} league for his low avarice: and Valens ridicu- ^{Cæcina} led Cæcina for his arrogance and presumption. ^{and Va-} ^{lens.} Concealing however their mutual hatred, they united in the common cause, and in concert wrote letters full of bitter reproaches against Otho, keeping no measures, nor fearing to forfeit all hopes of pardon, in case their enterprise did not succeed: whereas Otho's generals abstained

* Studia tamen militum in Cæcinam inclinabant, super benignitatem animi qua promptior habebatur, etiam vigore ætatis, proceritate corporis, & quodam inani favore, Tac.

A. R. 820. abstained from all invectives against Vitellius,
A. C. 69: ample as the field was for them.

Compari-
son of Otho
and Vitel-
lius.

As vicious as those two princes were, the public then made a difference in favour of Vitellius, whose *indolent voluptuousness seemed less to be feared than Otho's violent passions. By the murder of Galba, the latter had greatly added to the sentiments of terror and hatred the people had long conceived: none imputed the cause and beginning of the war to the other. Vitellius, a glutton and a slave to his belly, seemed no man's enemy but his own: Otho's luxury, cruelty and audaciousness endangered the republic. Such are the observations Tacitus makes; notwithstanding which, I shall venture to say, that if Otho was most criminal, yet most good might be expected from him. His conduct, from the time of his invading the empire, deserves praise in many respects; whereas all Vitellius's actions deserve the highest contempt: his stupid facility, was an opening to every evil, and cut off all hopes of good.

Otho re-
solves to
venture a
battle con-
trary to
the advice
of his best
generals.
Tac. Hist.
II. 31.

By the junction of Cæcina and Valens, they were in a condition to offer battle, nor did any thing hinder a general action if Otho was willing. He held a great council to deliberate whether it were best to protract the war, or try his fortune. Suetonius Paulinus was for temporising: and as he was thought the most experienced

* Minus Vitellii ignavæ voluptates, quam Othonis flagrantissimæ libidines timebantur: addiderat huic terrorem atque odium cædes Galbæ: contra illi initium belli nemo imputabat. Vitellius ventre & gula sibi ipsi hostis: Otho luxu, sævitia, audacia, reipublicæ exitiosior ducebatur. *Tac.*

experienced officer in the empire, he judged it A. R. 820.
 becoming his reputation to back his opinion by A. C. 69.
 profound reasonings and reflections, which embraced the whole plan of the war.

Accordingly he represented, “ That all
 “ Vitellius’s forces were arrived, and there
 “ was no danger of their receiving any additional strength, the Gauls being in such a
 “ ferment, and the Germans so daunted, that
 “ they could not leave the Rhine unguarded.
 “ That the Britannic legions were sufficiently
 “ employed by the barbarians they had to
 “ fight, and separated by the sea. That Spain
 “ had but few troops. That Narbonnoise
 “ Gaul was sufficiently kept in awe by Otho’s
 “ fleet, and terrified by the bad success of the
 “ battle Vitellius’s men had ventured to fight.
 “ That Transpadane Gaul, enclosed between
 “ the Alps and the Po, having no communication with the sea, and being harrassed by the
 “ passage of the troops through that country,
 “ would not be able to furnish the enemy with
 “ necessary provisions, and consequently they
 “ must soon want. That the German auxiliaries, who made so formidable an appearance, were far from being as stout as they
 “ seemed, and, if the war lasted till summer,
 “ would be overcome by the bare change of
 “ climate. That * armies, whose first effort
 “ would have been thought capable of bearing
 “ down all before them, had often seen their
 “ strength vanish, and been reduced to nothing
 “ by delay. We, on the contrary, added he,
 “ have infinite resources, on which we can
 absolutely.

* *Multa belli impatu valida, per tædia & moras evanuisse.*
Tac.

A. R. 820. "absolutely depend. Pannonia, Mæsia and
 A. C. 69. "Dalmatia, are ready to assist us with their
 "powerful armies. We have on our side
 "Italy *, Rome, the capital of the empire,
 "the senate and Roman people, awful names,
 "whose authority can never be abolished,
 "though it may suffer a transitory eclipse. The
 "riches of the public, as well as of private per-
 "sons, are at our command, and it is well
 "known that money will do more than the sword
 "in civil wars. Our soldiers are used to the
 "climate of Italy, and able to bear its heat.
 "Before us are the Po, and several well forti-
 "fied towns, properly provided with troops and
 "provisions, and of which not one, as we may
 "hope, after what we have seen Placentia do,
 "will yield to the enemy's attacks. What
 "forces us to fight? we cannot but gain by
 "protracting the war. In a few days the four-
 "teenth legion, whose reputation none is un-
 "acquainted with, will be here with the troops
 "of Mæsia. We will then consider farther
 "of this matter: and if a battle be thought
 "adviseable, at least we shall fight with a very
 "great additional strength."

Marius Celsus agreed with Paulinus. An-
 nius Gallus, whose opinion was sent for, he
 being confined to his bed by a fall from his
 horse, was of the same opinion: but Otho in-
 clined to think differently. His brother Ti-
 tianus, and the prætorian prefect Proculus,
 bold

* Italiam, & caput rerum urbem, senatumque & populum
 Romanum; nunquam obscura nomina, etsi aliquando obum-
 brentur; publicas privatasque opes, & immensam pecuniam,
 inter civiles discordias ferro validiorem. Tac.

bold through inexperience, strongly insisted, A.R. 820. that the gods and Otho's fortune would direct A.C. 69. the battle; and to prevent contradiction had recourse to flattery. Their sentiments prevailed, and the rashness of their adulation got the better of the wisdom of more prudent men.

It is proper however to observe, that Otho Reasons of Otho's haste to engage. Tac. Hist. II. 37. had several reasons for wanting to engage. Besides his not being able to bear the uncertainty he was in, and that his vivacity and impatience made him sink under his uneasiness, and chuse rather to hasten a decision at the hazard of whatever might ensue; the ardour of the prætorians to engage the enemy was likewise a law to him. Those troops, unaccustomed to the fatigues of war in the field, longed to return to their peaceable service in the city; and presumptuously thought too they could not but conquer whenever they engaged, and that a general action would be decisive, and enable them to return instantly to the sweets of Rome, the object of their incessant regrets.

Another, and still stronger motive urged Otho, if it be true, as several have pretended, that the two armies were disposed to be reconciled and agree, not to cut each other's throats for a quarrel between two of the most worthless men on earth, but rather to sacrifice them both, and chuse a person capable of doing honour to the empire, or even leave that choice to the senate. If things were to take that turn, Suetonius Paulinus, a man of known merit, and the oldest of all of consular rank, might conceive great hopes; and that, according to this account, was the secret cause why he advised delay.

Tacitus

A. R. 820. Tacitus thinks there is no manner of probability in this conjecture, and refutes it with warmth. Can * any one, says he, believe that Paulinus, whose consummate prudence is very justly celebrated, could ever hope, that in so corrupt an age, a multitude of armed men could have moderation enough to renounce war for the sake of peace, after having broken that peace for the sake of war? Can it with any appearance of truth be supposed, either that armies composed of so many different nations, whose language and manners had no affinity with each other, could have concerted such a scheme; or that the chief officers and leaders, most of them given up to luxury, over head and ears in debt, and capable of any crime, should consent to acknowledge a prince, who was not as bad as themselves, and indebted to them for his elevation? Ambition, adds he, has stained even the best times of the republic with bloodshed and slaughter. The legions did not part without drawing their swords, either at Pharsalia, or in the plains of Philippi; much less were Otho's and Vitellius's armies capable of such heroic moderation and wisdom.

One can hardly resist the strength of this reasoning. But Tacitus himself owns, it is possible that the worthlessness of the two emperors, for whom they were contending, may have

* Neque Paulinum, qua prudentia fuit, sperasse corruptissimo seculo, tantum vulgi moderationem reor, ut qui pacem belli amore turbaverant, bellum pacis caritate deponerent; neque aut exercitus linguis moribusque dissonos in hunc consensum potuisse coalescere, aut legatos aut duces, magna ex parte luxus, egestatis, scelerum sibi conscios, nisi pollutem obstrictumque meritis suis principem passuros. *Tac.*

have made the most sensible and judicious of the soldiers think of peace. Suetonius Paulinus and Marius Celsus, chief officers of Otho's army, were honest men and good citizens, who might be pleased with such an idea; though they found it difficult to execute: at least Otho might suspect they were, and that suspicion was sufficient to determine him to suffer no delay.

Battle being resolved on, the only remaining question was, Whether Otho should be present, or secure his person. A wrong step was again taken in that respect, at the instigation of the same flatterers who prevailed in the council.

They affected on this occasion an extraordinary zeal for the prince's safety; the consequence of which was, that Paulinus and Celsus, already disgusted with the affront put on their first advice, were not disposed to give a second, by which Otho might seem to be endangered. It was therefore resolved that the emperor should retire to Brixellum*. Tacitus sets down that day as the epoch of Otho's ruin. In the first place he carried with him a part of the prætorian cohorts and of his best troops; and secondly, those that remained behind had no longer the same courage, because they suspected their commanders; and Otho, in whom only the soldiers had confidence, and who himself had confidence in none but them, had left the generals and army to their mutual suspicions, and consequently in a situation in which they could not act in concert; a proof of which was soon manifest.

Vitellius's generals were perfectly well informed of the state of Otho's camp. Nothing

A. R. 820. is more common in civil wars than deserters ;
 A. C. 69. and spies by endeavouring to draw the secret
 Engage- out of others, are often apt to betray their
 ment in an own. Cæcina and Valens, as quite and easy
 island in as their enemies were hot and impetuous, wisely
 the Po, turned to their own advantage the imprudent
 wherein rashness of those they had to deal with, and
 Vitellius's troops have the advan- attentively watched the first proper opportunity
 tage. that should offer to fight. In the mean time
 they employed their soldiers in building a
 bridge of boats over the Po, opposite to the
 spot guarded by Otho's gladiators commanded
 by Macer.

In the middle of the river was an island, to
 which the gladiators frequently passed over in
 boats, and the Germans swam. Macer engaged
 there in a skirmish, in which he was beaten,
 a great number of his gladiators killed or
 drowned, and his boats sunk or taken by the
 enemy. This engagement happened in the
 sight of both armies : and Otho's troops, spec-
 tators of their companions defeat, were so in-
 censed against Macer, that his life was in dan-
 ger. One of them struck him with his lance,
 and several more rushing on him sword in hand,
 would have killed him, if the tribunes and
 centurions had not ran in, and taken him from
 them. Otho approved what the soldiers had
 done, and broke Macer, to succeed whom, he
 sent Flavius Sabinus *, consul elect. The mu-
 tinous † troops were always glad to change their
 commanding

* This consul elect is not to be confounded with Vespasi-
 an's brother, an ancient consul, who bore the same names,
 and was prefect of Rome at the time we are speaking of.

† *Læto milite ad mutationem ducum, & ducibus od
 erebras seditiones, tam infestam militiam aspernantibus. Tac.*

commanding officers ; who on their side quitted with pleasure a service, in which they were continually exposed to seditions, and had as much to fear from their own men, as from the enemy. A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.

From the time of Otho's leaving the camp, his brother Titianus had the title of commander in chief: but in fact the power resided in the prætorian præfect Proculus. All the prudence and experience * of Paulinus and Celsus were of no use, because none would listen to their advice ; and their empty names of generals served only to make them in some measure answerable for the faults of their imprudent colleague, who usurped their authority. The officers were uneasy and full of distrusts, seeing how far bad counsels prevailed over good. The soldiers did not want ardour, but it was of an untractable kind, chusing rather to interpret their general's orders, than to follow them. A general action, and Otho's ruin were drawing near. Otho's army
my badly
governed.

Vitellius's army was encamped near Cremona, and Otho's at Bedriac, as I before said. Proculus, resolving to seek the enemy, marched from Bedriac, leaving however his camp subsisting with what troops were necessary to guard it ; and advancing about four miles, formed a new one, on a spot of ground so ill chosen, that in the month of April, and in a country full Motions of
that army
to seek the
enemy.

* Celsus et Paulinus, quum prudentia eorum nemo uteretur, inani nomine ducum, alienæ culpæ prætendebantur. Tribuni Centurionesque ambigui, quod speritis melioribus deterrimi valebant. Miles alacer, qui tamen jussa ducum interpretari, quam exsequi mallet. Tac.

A. R. 820. full of rivers, his troops were distressed for
 A. C. 69. want of water. There a council was again held, to consider whether they should offer battle. On one side, Otho's repeated orders were to fight; on the other, the soldiers wanted to see their emperor at their head; many were for calling in the troops beyond the Po, on the right hand side of that river. It is difficult, says Tacitus, to determine what would have been best. Thus much at least is certain, that worse steps could not have been taken than those that were took.

It was resolved to march to the spot where the Po and Adda join, which being above Cremona where the enemy was encamped, Proculus's design seems * to have been to enclose Vitellius's army between his and the body of troops which Otho had at Brixellum. But in order to do that, he must have filed off before the enemy and exposed his flanks; which must have been the reason why Paulinus and Celsus disapproved of that step, saying it would expose their troops, already fatigued by a march of several miles, and embarrassed with their baggage, to be attacked by the enemy fresh out of their camp, and having with them only their arms, and what was necessary for battle, by which they would have a great advantage. Titianus and Proculus could make no objections to those reasons: but exerting the authority of the command in chief, with which they were vested, alledged the

* I express myself thus because I must own this is only my conjecture, grounded on the position of the places and the motions of Otho's generals, and not on any thing Tacitus says.

the emperor's orders. In fact another courier A.R. 820. A.C. 69. arrived from Otho, with orders still more urgent and positive than the former, together with complaints and reproaches against the timidity and slowness of the generals. Otho wanted to see an end of the war: he was tired * of delays, and could no longer bear to fluctuate between hope and fear. Accordingly all were obliged to resolve to march, and run the risk of the worst concerted enterprize that ever was.

The enemy did not expect them. At their Battle of Bedriac, in which Otho's army is defeated. approach, Valens, who was left in the camp, gave the signal for battle: and Cæcina immediately complying, left the bridge he was building, where he was just then hearing the proposals of two tribunes of the prætorian cohorts. The conversation was interrupted by the necessity Cæcina was under of running to the battle, by which means the purport of it was never known.

Whilst the legions, in consequence of a custom I think worthy of observation, were drawing lots, what rank each should be in during the battle, the horse attacked the enemy. But unable to bear the shock of Otho's, though inferior in number, they would have been drove with great disorder and danger back to the retrenchments of the camp, if the Italic legion had not forced them sword in hand to rally and return to the fight.

This first disorder was attended with no bad consequence. Vitellius's army was drawn out quietly and without confusion. In Otho's, the

* *Eger mora, et spei impatiens.*

A.R. 820. the commanding * officers were on the con-
 A.C. 69. trary struck with a bad presage, and the sol-
 diers indisposed against their leaders: all was
 mixed pel-mel, combatants, servants, and car-
 riages; and the road, bordered on each side by
 deep ditches, would have been too narrow even
 for an army to march peaceably. Many sought
 their standards from which they had strayed;
 all was in tumult and confusion, none knew
 their posts, for the generals and officers had
 not assigned any, but each man, according as
 he was more or less bold, placed himself in the
 front or rear.

To this confusion, so unfit to strengthen
 their courage, was added a false joy, by which
 the edge of it was entirely taken off. On a
 sudden a report was spread in Otho's army,
 that their adversaries having changed their
 minds, were forsaking Vitellius's interest. It
 is not known from whence that report pro-
 ceeded, whether from an indiscreet levity of
 some of Otho's partizans, or designedly spread
 by Vitellius's secret emissaries and friends:
 However that may be, the foremost ranks of
 Otho's troops, thinking it true, drawing near
 their enemies saluted them as friends, in return
 to which they were answered by menaces, and
 at the same time suspected of treason, by their
 comrades in the rear, who could put no other
 construction on so singular a behaviour.

In

* Apud Othonianos pavidi duces, miles duceibus infensus,
 mixta vehicula et lixæ, et, præruptis utrimque fossis, viâ
 quieto quoque agmini angusta. Circumsistere alii signa sua,
 quætere alii: incertus undique clamor, accurrentium, vociferantium:
 et, ut cuique audacia aut formido, in primam postremamve aciem prorumpabant, vel revehebantur. Tac.

In the mean time the battle was begun by Vitellius's troops, who, in good order, closing their lines, and superior both in number and strength of combatants, charged them vigorously. Otho's men, though fewer in number, divided into small bodies, and fatigued by a long march, defended themselves bravely. The general action was subdivided into numbers of particular ones. In places embarrassed by trees and vines, some fought close, others at a distance; some in batallions, and others in companies. On the high way, which Tacitus elsewhere calls the Posthumian way, they fought man to man. The combatants, seeing each other, and being seen by all, used their utmost efforts to have the honour of deciding the whole quarrel by their bravery. Neglecting their javelins, which were to be darted from afar, they had recourse to swords and hatchets, to cut through their opponents armour and helmets, and beat each other, till at last the weakest were obliged to give way.

Between the Po and the high way was a plain, in which two legions fought valiantly; the first, for Otho, the twenty-first for Vitellius. The latter was an old corps used to victory: the other had never before seen a battle: but brave and courageous, and ardently wishing to gain honour, had at first the advantage, and cutting to pieces the first line of the one and twentieth legion, took its eagle. The old soldiers, incensed at that affront, collected all their strength, and fought with such fury that they put their adversaries to flight, after killing the commander of the legion Orphidius Benignus,

Tac. Hist.
III. 21.
II. 42.

A. R. 820. Benignus, and taking most of the colours and
A. C. 69. standards.

Tac. Hist.
II. 54, &
56.

In another place the thirteenth legion had the same fate as the first. A detachment of the fourteenth, (for the whole legion was not at the battle) was likewise surrounded, and all their valour could not withstand superior numbers. Thus Otho's party was worsted every where, and what completed their defeat was, a body of Batavians commanded by Alphænus Varus, who, after having cut to pieces on the borders of the Po, the gladiators so often mentioned, attacked Otho's army in flank, and breaking through it, put the finishing stroke to that day's contention. The conquered had no resource but flight, and accordingly strove to reach Bedriac which was at a great distance from them: but in that too, they were hindered by the heaps of dead bodies of men and horses with which the roads were covered, by which means numbers of them were slain: for the Romans took no prisoners in their civil wars, because, as they could not make slaves of them, they would only have been a burden to the conquerors.

The generals and chief officers of Otho's army, behaved differently in what related to themselves personally. Paulinus and Licinius Proculus avoided the camp for fear of the soldier's fury, and sought a remote retreat, where to wait the event of things. Vædus Aquila, commander of the thirteenth legion, suffered for not taking the same precaution. Entering the camp before night, he was assailed by a troop of the seditious, who sparing neither re-
proaches

proaches nor blows, * called him a deserter and A. R. 620. traitor; not that they could tax him with any A. C. 69. particular fault: but the multitude is always ready to father its own shame on another.— Tacitus does not tell us what became of that officer. It seems reasonable to think he was saved by Annius Gallus, who alone of all the generals, seems on this occasion to have preserved any authority over the soldiers. He prevailed on them by prayers and remonstrances, not to add to the misfortune of their defeat; by their intestine furies ready to make them cut each other's throats; but to be assured that at all events, whether the war was ended, or they were to fight again, their only safeguard was union and concord. The soldiers were appeased, calm was restored amongst them, and centinels and guards set agreeable to military discipline. Titianus and Celsus arriving at the camp in the night, found things in that situation and were in no danger.

The conquered troops were quite dispirited. The prætorians only, who Plutarch says be- The con-
quered sub-
mit, and
swear alle-
giance to
Vitellius.
Plut. Oth.
Tac. Hist.
II. 44. haved ill during the battle, imputed their defeat to the treachery of their officers; and not to the superiority of the enemy. They said, "The victory had cost their enemies dear; that their horse had been routed; that they had lost the eagle of one of their legions; that Otho was still on the other side of the Po, with a great army; that the Mælian legions would soon arrive; that a great
"part

* *Non probis, non manibus abstinent: desertorem proditoremque increpant, nullo proprio crimine ejus sed, more vulgi, suum quisque flagitium aliis objectantes. Tac.*

A. R. 820. "part of the army had staid behind in the
A. C. 69. "camp at Bedriac; that all those troops at
"least had not been beaten; and, that if fate
"had decreed their fall, it was most honou-
"ble to fall in battle." The prætorians talked
no longer in this style the next day. The re-
flections they made during the night, cooled
their courage, and they with the rest agreed to
submit to the conqueror.

Vitellius's army stopt five miles short of
Bedriac, and consequently a mile from the
camp from whence Otho's set out for the battle.
They did not entrench * themselves; their
arms and victory made that precaution need-
less. But great as their confidence was, they
did not attack the enemy's camp, either fear-
ing not to succeed in that attempt, or hoping
for a voluntary submission.

Phil. Otho.
** Tac.*

Nor were they disappointed in the latter.
Marius Celsus and Annius Gallus came the
next day to sue for peace, offering to acknow-
ledge Vitellius for their emperor. The nego-
ciation was neither long nor difficult: all parties
were agreed in a moment, and the deputies
returning to the camp, all the entrances to it
were thrown open, and those who so lately had
fought for Otho, swore allegiance to Vitellius.
The conquerors and conquered joining, em-
braced each other, shedding tears, and with a
mixture

* *Expeditis, & tantum ad prælium egressis, munimen-
tum fuere arma & victoria. Tac.*

† *Tum victi victoresque in lacrymas effusi, sortem civili-
um armorum misera lætitia detestantes. Iisdem tentoriis,
alii fratrum, alii propinquorum vulnera fovebant. Spes &
pæniam in ambiguo: certa funera & luctus. Nec quisquam
adeo mali expers, ut non aliquam mortem mæreret. Tac.*

mixture of joy and grief, detested the horrors of A. R. 820.
civil wars. Each found in the opposite party a A. C. 69.
brother or a friend wounded, whose situation re-
quired their care, and excited their tenderness.
The rewards with which they had flattered
themselves, were still uncertain : to see their
relations wounded or slain was all they had
hitherto gained. Orphidius's body was sought
for, to give it funeral honours. Some others
were likewise buried by their friends. The
rest of the bodies lay rotting on the earth.

Otho waited quietly at Brixellum the event Otho kills himself.
of the battle, having previously resolved what Tac. Hist. II. 46.
to do in case he lost it; a low and melancholy
murmur first announced his misfortune, which
soon after was confirmed by a soldier arrived
from the fight, who finding he could hardly
gain credit, and that some called him a rogue,
and others a coward for flying before the battle
was over, stabbed himself at the emperor's
feet. So great was the affection of the troops
for Otho, and so ardent their zeal, that they
did not wait his explaining himself. A general
shout exhorted him to take courage. It was
represented to him that he had great forces
still remaining untouched, " And we our-
selves, added the soldiers, are ready to un-
dertake and suffer any thing for your ser-
vice." Nor was it out of flattery that they
spoke. Seized with a kind of enthusiasm,
battle and an opportunity to retrieve their for-
tune was all they wished. Such as were at a
distance from Otho, stretched out their arms
towards him, whilst those who were near em-
braced his knees.

Plotius

A.R. 820. Plotius Firmus the prætorian præfect, was
 A.C. 69. still more zealous than the soldiers. Suspecting Otho's design, he earnestly begged of him not to abandon so faithful an army, which had deserved so well from him. He represented to him, "That * there was more real courage in bearing adversity, than in sinking under it. That brave men should struggle against fortune, and spite of her frowns still hope and wish for better times, and that it was the business of cowards only to be pusillanimous and despair."

This passed in sight of the army; and according as Otho seemed either moved or confirmed in his resolution, shouts of joy, or groans were heard from all. The prætorians, personally attached to Otho, were not the only ones who shewed that zeal. The Mælian legions, lately arrived at Aquilæa, had sent before hand deputies to assure him he might depend on the same resolution and fidelity in them: so that it cannot be doubted but that Otho might easily have renewed a violent and bloody war, the success of which would have been uncertain between the conquerors and conquered.

But he had always been extremely averse to civil wars. We are told that the very names of Brutus and Cassius made him shudder; and that he never would have undertaken what he did against Galba, had he not been convinced it might be done without war. Persisting in
 the

* *Majore animo tolerari adversa, quam relinqui. Fortes & strenuos, etiam contra fortunam, spei insistere: timidos & ignavos ad desperationem formidine properare. Tac.*

the same sentiments he desired silence might be made, and spoke as follows. " My * life
 " would be purchased to dear, if to preserve
 " it, that faithful and virtuous courage you
 " shew for me, was to be exposed to new
 " dangers. The more you give me room to
 " hope, the more glorious my death will be.
 " I have tried fortune and am satisfied. Do
 " not you consider how short a time that for-
 " tune has lasted: it is most difficult to use
 " moderation in a state of prosperity, when
 " one does not expect to enjoy it long. Vi-
 " tellius began the civil war. To his charge
 " must be laid, the necessity we were under
 " of fighting for the empire. It will be an
 " honour to me to have been the cause of
 " only one battle. By that it is that I would
 " have posterity judge of Otho. Vitellius
 " will enjoy his brother, wife, and children, I
 want

* Hunc animam, hanc virtutem vestram ultra periculis
 objicere, nimis grande vitæ meæ pretium, puto. Quanto
 plus spei ostenditis, si vivere placeret, tanto pulchrior mors
 erit. Experti invicem sumus, ego ac fortuna. Neo tempus
 computaveritis. Difficilius est temperare felicitati, qua te
 non putes diu usurum. Civile bellum a Vitellio cæpit, & ut
 de principatu certaremus armis, initium illic fuit. Ne plus-
 quam semel certemus penes me exemplum erit. Hinc Otho-
 nem posteritas æstinet. Fruetur Vitellius fratre, conjuge,
 liberis. Mihi non ultione, neque solatis opus est. Alii
 diutius imperium tenuerint: nemo tam fortiter reliquit.—
 An ego tantum Romanæ pubis, tot egregios exercitus sterni
 rursus & reipublicæ eripi patiar? Eat hic mecum animus,
 tanquam perituri pro me fueritis: sed este superstites. Nec
 diu moremur, ego incolumitatem vestram, vos constantiam
 meam. Plura de extremis loqui, pars ignaviæ est. Præci-
 puum destinationes meæ documentum habite, quod de ne-
 mine queror. Nam incusare deos vel homines, ejus est qui
 vivere velit. Tac.

A. R. 820. "want neither revenge nor comfort. Others
 A. C. 69. "will have the advantage over me, of having
 "reigned longer, but none can have renounced
 "empire more generously. Shall I suffer the
 "flower of the Roman youth, such flourishing
 "armies, to be again cut to pieces, and the re-
 "public robbed of them for my quarrels?—
 "I have the comfort of carrying with me
 "a lively proof of your zeal: but though
 "you would sacrifice your lives for me, my
 "glory forbids me to accept the offer. Let
 "me be no longer an obstacle to your safety,
 "nor you to my fixed resolves. To talk
 "much of death is the part of a coward.—
 "The best proof I can give you, how firmly
 "I am bent on executing what I have deter-
 "mined is, that I complain of no man: for
 "he that accuses the gods or man wishes to
 "live."

This speech, which Tacitus puts in Otho's mouth, strongly expresses all the fanaticism of suicide. Love of glory is the prevailing motive, the public welfare has the least share in it, and seems to be brought in only out of decency. I will be bold to say that Plutarch has given a better colour to Otho's resolution, by making his love for the republic his chief and essential motive. "If I have been thought
 "worthy * of the Roman empire, says Otho
 "in

* Εἰ τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίας ἄξιός ἐστιν, δεῖ με τῆς μῆς ψυχῆς ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος ἀφιδύειν· οἶδα τὴν νίκην τοῖς ἐκείνους ἐβρίσκειν ἢ διχουρεῖν ἔσται . . . ἀλλ' ἔκ ἐτι πρὸς Ἀντίοχον, ἔδδ Πόρβον, ἔδδ Κιμῶνα, ὁ πολέμου ὑπὲρ τῆς Ἰταλίας· ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαίοις πολέμωνις ἀμφότεροι, τὴν πατρίδα καὶ ἐκείνους ἀδικουμένῃ καὶ ἐκείνοι· καὶ γὰρ το αἶσθησι τῆ πατρίδος ἐκείνη κακὴν ἔστιν . . . δύνάμει καλλίον ἀποθανεῖν ἢ ἄρχεσθαι·

“ in the Greek historian, I ought to sacrifice A. R. 820
 “ myself to the good of my country. I know A. C. 69.
 “ our adversaries are not sure of victory. But
 “ it is not against Hannibal, Pyrrhus, or the
 “ Cimbrians, that we are fighting for Italy.
 “ We are making war against Romans; and
 “ whether conquerors or conquered, equally
 “ hurt our country: for what is good to the
 “ victor, is a detriment to the republic. Be
 “ assured that it is more honourable for me
 “ to die than to command the universe: for
 “ I do not see how I can be so serviceable to
 “ this nation by gaining the victory, as by sa-
 “ crificing my life to peace and concord, and
 “ preventing Italy’s seeing a second day like
 “ that of Bedriac.” If Otho thought, as Plu-
 tarch makes him speak, he deserves to be
 ranked with a Decius and a Codrus: but I
 greatly fear what Tacitus makes him say,
 is nearer the truth. The impatience of his
 character, and that prejudice which made him
 think self-murder the surest and shortest way
 to glory, seem to have been the principles on
 which he acted: for, how else can we recon-
 cile a horrid parricide with the sublime heroism
 of sacrificing his own life to the good of his
 country?

In the last hours preceding his death, Otho
 shewed the same flegm, and the same concern
 for others, as Cato, whom in other respects
 he was so little like, had done before him.

Checking

ὁ γὰρ ὅτε τὴν ἑλπίδα τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ὄφελον ἵσταται κεραιήσας, ἥλικον ἐπιδρα-
 μαντὸν ὅπως εὐρήσῃς ἐν ὁμοψυχίᾳ, ἐν τῇ μὴ πάλιν ἡμεῖς αὐτοὺς
 ἐπιδρῶν τὴν Ἰταλίαν. *Plut. Oth.*

A. R. 820. Checking the tears and unseasonable complaints of those about him with a serene countenance and steady voice, he spoke * to them all with mildness, exhorting or praying them, according to their several ranks and ages, to depart quickly, and not irritate the victors' wrath by their stay. He ordered boats and carriages to be provided for them, and burnt the letters and memorials he had received, in which too great a zeal for him, or too strong an aversion to Vitellius, was expressed. He distributed money, but with prudence and discretion, and not like a man who minds not what he does because he is going to die.

Perceiving his nephew, young Salvius Cocceianus, trembling and sorely afflicted, he endeavoured to comfort him, praising the goodness of his heart, and blaming his fears. "Vitellius, said he to him, whose whole family, I have preserved, cannot be so ungrateful and merciless as not to spare mine. I deserve the victor's clemency by my readiness to rid him of a rival: for I do not wait the last extremity; but whilst I have an army ready and desirous to fight, save the republic the loss of Roman blood. I †
" have

* *Ut cuique ætas aut dignitas, comiter appellatos, irent propere, neu remorando iram victoris asperarent, juvenes auctoritate, senes precibus monebat: placidus ore, intrepidus verbis, intempestivas suorum lacrymas coercens. Tac.*

† *Satis mihi nominis, satis nobilitatis posteris quæsitum. Post Julios, Claudios, Sulpicios, se primum in familiam novam imperium intulisse. Proinde erecto animo capesseret vitam, neu patrum sibi Othonem fuisse, aut oblivisceretur unquam, aut nimium meminisset. Tac.*

" have acquired a name great enough : so mo- A.R. 820.
 " dern a family as mine, is sufficiently illus- A. C. 69.
 " trated by my having brought the empire
 " into it, next after the Julii, Claudii, and Sul-
 " picii. Take courage : fear not for your life,
 " and remember that to be nephew to an em-
 " peror, is an honour you ought never to for-
 " get, but of which you ought likewise not to
 " think too much."

Otho wrote his sister a letter of consolation : *Suet. Otho*
 and recommended his ashes to Statilia Messali- 10.
 na, Nero's widow, whom he intended to marry.

He then took a little rest : but just when he *Tac. Hist.*
 was thinking of death, a sudden uproar of the *III. 49.*
 soldiers, who menaced the senators in their re- *Suet. Oth.*
 treat, required his attention. " Let us add, *II. 12.*
 " said he, one night more to our life." He *Ph. Oth.*
 stepped out, and severely reprimanding the au- *Dio.*
 thors of the sedition, gave audience to those
 who came to take leave of him, till every thing
 was got ready for their departure.

Towards evening he drank a glass of water,
 and ordering two daggers to be brought, ex-
 amined them carefully, and put one under his
 pillow. He spent the night very quietly ; the
 servants who attended him, said, he even slept
 sound. At break of day, he called his favourite
 freeman, whom he had charged to take care of
 the departure of the senators and other persons
 of distinction ; and being told by him that all
 was safe and well, " Haste thee out then, said
 " he to him, for fear the soldiers should think
 " thee an accomplice in my death, and punish
 " thee for it." The freeman being gone, Otho
 stabbed himself under the left pap. The groans
 forced from him by pain, being overheard, his

A.R. 820. slaves and freemen, with Plotius Firmus, the A. C. 69. prætorian prefect, entered his room, and he died in their presence of the single wound he had given himself.

His funeral.
The soldiers regret him, and after his example, several of them kill themselves.

His obsequies were immediately celebrated, as he himself had earnestly requested they should, for fear his head should be cut off after his death, and made the sport of his enemies. His body was borne by the soldiers of the prætorian cohorts, who loaded him with praises, shedding tears over him, and kissing his wound and hand. Some killed themselves near his funeral pile, not that they thought themselves more guilty than others, nor out of fear, but merely because they loved their prince, and were desirous to imitate his, they thought glorious, death. Suicide was at that time a kind of epidemical disease: Bedriac, Placentia, and every place where troops were, furnished instances of it. A monument was erected to Otho near Brixellum, the plainness of which secured its duration. Plutarch says, he saw it several ages after, with only the bare inscription of Otho's name. He died the fifteenth or sixteenth of April, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, after reigning three months. He was born the twenty-eight of that month in the year of Rome seven hundred and eighty-three.

His character.

His character was an uncommon mixture of good and ill; with this difference however, that his vices, his excessive debauchery, and the crime he committed in murdering his prince are certain and notorious facts; whereas the moderation and mildness, which do honour to his reign, are liable to doubt, and a bad interpretation, on account of the short duration of

of his fortune, and the continual peril in which A. R. 820.
 he was. It is however true, that during his A. C. 69.
 government of Lusitania, he shewed himself
 capable of behaving well, when he could lay
 aside his pleasures and apply to business. I
 leave it to Tacitus to praise his death. His
 effeminacy, which was so great, that he was as
 nice in his dress as any fine lady could be,
 plucking the hairs out of his beard, and wash-
 ing his face with crumbs of bread soaked in
 water, to make his complexion fair and smooth,
 has been deservedly blamed by all. The just-
 est idea that can be formed of him, is perhaps
 to consider him as a man extreme in all he
 did, from whom every thing might have been
 dreaded, had he followed his first bent; and
 every thing hoped, if his vivacity had taken a
 virtuous turn.

I must now give an account of two events,
 which I could not have inserted in their proper
 places without interrupting the thread of my
 narration. Tacitus relates them one after the
 other, before Otho's departure for the war.

A false Nero disturbed Asia and Greece. A False
 freeman, or, as some say, a slave, taking ad- Nero.
 vantage of the various reports concerning Ne- Tac. Hist.
 ro's death; and of the doubt many were in II. 2.
 whether he really was dead, undertook to per-
 sonate that emperor. His features were like
 Nero's: he was a musician, in which too he
 resembled him; and had a sufficient stock of
 impudence to carry on the deceit. He picked
 up, and gained over by fine promises, a great
 number of deserters, vagabonds who fled from
 place to place, to avoid punishment, and were
 reduced to the utmost misery. With them he

A.R. 820. embarked ; and being cast by a storm on an island called Cythnus in the Egean sea, he there gave himself out publicly for Nero, drew over to his party several soldiers returning from the east, causing such as refused to acknowledge him, to be killed, and plundering the trading ships that used those seas, made use of the booty he got from them to purchase arms, which he distributed among young robust slaves who had attached themselves to him. Nay more, he ventured to attack a centurion who was carrying a symbol * of friendship and alliance from the Syrian legions to the prætorian cohorts. Sisenna, that was the centurion's name, discovering the imposture, and fearing his violence, could protect himself only by flight, and left the island privately. This incident ought to have undeceived those who had been his dupes ; but, on the contrary, it added to the general terror. All they considered was, the power of a man armed and guarded, whom they feared : and the just indignation with which the present state of the empire, disputed by Otho and Vitellius, inspired every man, proneness to change, and love of novelty, induced the vulgar to espouse a great name, without enquiring whether it was usurped or not.

* Two
right
hands join-
ed together.

A lucky accident discovered the impostor, whose strength encreased daily. Calpurnius Asprenas being appointed governor of Galatia and Pamphylia, by Galba, sailed from Italy with two galleys of the Misenum fleet, and stopt at the island of Cythnus. The captains of the galleys were immediately ordered to attend Nero. They went, and the rogue composing

posing his countenance, and putting on a sorrowful look, reminded them of the allegiance they had formerly sworn to his name, and begged them to carry him over to Syria or Egypt. Whether they too were imposed on, or did it only out of cunning and artifice, they said, they would acquaint their soldiers with his request, and after preparing them to receive him properly, return and let him know. But instead of that, they told Asprenas what had passed. He, at the head of the soldiers belonging to his two ships, attacked the impostor, who defended himself bravely, and was killed in the fight. After his death he was examined, and none knew him: only something was observed in his eyes though set, in his hair, and ghastly looks, ferocious and well suiting the audaciousness of his attempt. His body was carried to Asia, and from thence sent to Rome.

About the same time a great debate arose in the senate. As the frequent change of princes gave an opening, not only to liberty, but likewise to licentiousness, factions encreased, and the most trivial affairs made great noise and disturbance. Vibius * Crispus, who, by his riches, power and talents, had acquired a great name, rather than a good reputation, sued for justice from the senate, against Annius Faustus, a Roman knight, and a dangerous informer under Nero's reign. Crispus wanted to revenge his brother Vibius † Secundus formerly accused by Annius; and took advantage of a late decree, by which all informers were ordered to

One informer punished at the suit of another informer, more powerful than him.

*Vibius Crispus, opibus, potentia, ingenio, inter claros magis quam inter bonos. Tac.

† See the end of Book X.

A.R. 820. to be proceeded against, and * which, like a true cobweb, stopt the weak, but was broke through by the strong. Annius happened not to be one of those strong, which his adversary was, who accordingly was so favoured by the judges, that a great many of them were ready to condemn his opponent without hearing him. Some however there were, with whom nothing pleaded stronger in favour of the accused, than the too great power and influence of the accuser. They were for giving Annius time, for drawing up the informations in due form, and for hearing his defence, however odious and guilty he might be. They prevailed at first, and had judgment respite to another sitting: but at last Annius was condemned, to the great regret of many, who remembered having seen Crispus follow the same trade, and grow rich by it. Annius's * punishment was thought the just reward of his crimes, but the avenger was odious to all.

The order of time brings me to Vitellius's reign.

* *Id senatus consultum varie jactatum, & prout potens vel inops reus inciderat, infirmum aut validum. Tac.*

† *Nec pœna criminis, sed ultor displicebat. Tac.*

VITELLIUS.

VITELLIUS.

BOOK XIV.

SECT. I.

The conquered troops in vain offer the empire to Virginius. Extreme danger to which the senators brought from Rome by Otho, and left in Modena, are exposed. Vitellius is acknowledged in Rome without disturbance. Italy laid waste by the conquerors. Vitellius receives in Gaul the news of his victory. He makes his freeman Asiaticus a knight. He is acknowledged by the whole empire. He receives an imperial retinue from Blesus. He gives his son the name of Germanicus. His clemency towards the chiefs of the conquered party. He causes several captains of that party to be killed, A troop of Fanatics dispersed. Vitellius's sgluttony. He causes Dolabella to be killed. Modesty of Vitellius's wife and mother. Cluvius accused, obtains the punishment of his accuser. Vectius Botanus is sent to command the legions in Britain. Vitellius separates the conquered legions, and removes them from Italy. He breaks the Prætorians. Corrupt discipline among the victorious troops. Sedition among them, and a bloody battle. Seditious insurrection against Virginius. Vitellius disbands a great many of his troops. He visits the field of battle at Bedriac. Vitellius honours Nero's memory. Order forbid-
ding

ding Roman knights to fight as gladiators. Another order against astrologers. Their insolence. Emptiness of their art. Valens and Cæcina appointed consuls. Desolation of the countries through which Vitellius passed. A great number of the common people butchered by the soldiers. Terror and confusion in Rome. Vitellius's entry into Rome. He harangues the senate and people. An instance of his stupid negligence. He affects to be meanly popular. He attends the senate assiduously, and behaves there with great modesty. Enormous power of Valens and Cæcina, and their jealousies. Vitellius's order in favour of the nobility recalled from exile. The discipline of the victorious legions entirely corrupted by their abode in Rome. Sixteen Prætorian and four city cohorts formed out of the German troops. The soldiers demand the death of the most illustrious chiefs of the Gauls. Foolish extravagance. Misery of Rome. Vitellius' cruelties, Birth and first employments of Vespasian. He sends his son Titus to Rome to pay homage to Galba in his name. Titus learns Galba's death on the road, and returns to his father. Titus consults the oracle of Paphos. Pretended presages of Vespasian's elevation. Prophecies relating to the Messiah applied to Vespasian. Secret negotiations between Vespasian and Mucian. The legions in the east grow warm in favour of Vespasian. He is for waiting the decision of the quarrel between Otho and Vitellius. Vespasian still hesitates after Otho's death. Mucian's speech to Vespasian. Vespasian is prevailed on to accept the empire. His weakness in giving credit to divination. He

is proclaimed by the legions of Egypt, Judea and Syria, and acknowledged throughout all the east. A great council held at Beryta. Preparatives for war. Vitellius's first motions weak and languid. He at last makes the German legions take the field. Cæcina takes measures to betray Vitellius.

OTHO'S death would not have ended the war, nor put Vitellius in quiet possession of the empire, if the conquered troops had found any one to back their ardour. Immediately after Otho's funeral, they applied to Virginius, whom they had kept in Brixellum by a furious sedition; and renewing on that occasion all their rage, would absolutely proclaim him emperor, pressing him, even with menaces, to consent. Virginius had too much sense to accept the empire from a conquered army, after having refused it when offered by victorious legions. The seditious demanded he would at least undertake to negotiate their peace with Cæcina and Valens: but that he could not do without exposing himself to great danger, hated as he was by the German armies, who thought he despised and held them in contempt. He endeavoured therefore to elude their urgent solicitations, and was lucky enough to find an opportunity of escaping out at a back door. The mutineers finding they were abandoned, at last resolved to submit to the conqueror.

The war was consequently at an end; but a calm was not yet restored, and a great part of the senate brought by Otho from Rome, and left in Modena, was exposed to imminent danger.

A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.
The conquered troops in vain offer the empire to Virginius.
Tac. Hist. II. 51. & Plut. Oth.

A.R. 820. ger. When the news of the battle of Bedriac,
 A. C. 69. and of Vitellius's victory, reached that city, the
 Extreme danger to soldiers who were in it, refused to credit the
 which the report; and imagining the senators were ene-
 senators brought mies to Otho, watched and observed all their
 from discourses, put a bad construction on all their
 Rome by steps and actions, and endeavoured to pick a
 Otho, and quarrel, under colour of which they might fly
 left in Mo- to their arms, and shed more blood. The se-
 dena, are nators were by that means in great danger:
 exposed. and on the other hand they feared, if they
Tac. Hist. were not expeditious in acceding to the for-
 II. 52. tunate party, the victor might accuse them of
 coldness and indifference towards him. In that
 perplexity they * assembled, none of them well
 knowing what to determine, but each thinking
 to make his own fault less, by dividing it
 among a number of companions. Their un-
 easiness was increased by a deputation in form
 from the senate of the colony of Modena, to
 pay their ill-timed respects to them, calling
 them conscript fathers, and offering them arms
 and money. Nothing could be farther from
 their thoughts than to accept of such offers.
 But they knew better what they should not do,
 than what ought to be done; and after delibe-
 rating and debating a long time without com-
 ing to any resolution, they determined to ad-
 journ to Bologna, to hold a new council and
 gain time.

Their

* *Trepidî & utrimque anxii coeunt, nemo privatim
 expedito consilio, inter multos, societate culpæ tutiores,
 Onerabat paventium curas ordo Mucinensis, arma & pe-
 cuniam offerendo, appellabatque patres conscriptos, in-
 tempestivo honore. Tac.*

Their first study was to try to get farther A.R. 820, intelligence; to which end they dispatched A. C. 69. people every way, to bring them the freshest accounts they could. One of Otho's freemen told them, he had just left his master still alive, but bent on death, and thinking of nothing but posterity. This report, at the same time that it filled the senators with admiration, fixed their uncertainty; and they thought they might without danger declare in favour of Vitellius. They were already complimenting and giving joy to the new emperor's brother, when Cænus, Nero's freeman, came with an impudent lie, and plunged them again into their former uneasiness. Passing through Bologna, he gave out for certain that the fourteenth legion coming up after the battle, and being joined by the troops at Brixellum, had attacked the conquerors, cut them to pieces, and brought fortune back to Otho's party. Cænus's intention in inventing a falsehood, so criminal under such circumstances, was no other than to facilitate his return to Rome, and make the post-masters respect Otho's orders which he had for horses. He suffered for his rashness in a few days, being put to death by Vitellius's command. But just at that time, Otho's soldiers thinking what Cænus said was truth, the senators were in more danger than ever. What added to their fear was, the step they had taken in leaving Modena, as if by general consent; by which Otho, had he been alive and victorious, would have had a right to treat them as deserters. They met no more, each thinking of nothing but his own safety, till a letter from Valens put an end to their anxieties: besides which, Otho's death

A.R. 820. death was attended with such remarkable circumstances, that it was impossible the news of it should not soon be spread and certainly known.

Vitellius is
acknow-
ledged in
Rome
without
distur-
bance.

Not the least tumult or disturbance happened in Rome. The games in honour of Ceres, were celebrating at that very time. The moment it was known in the theatre that Otho was dead, and that Flavius Sabinus, the city præfect, had made all the troops under his command take the oath of allegiance to Vitellius, the new emperor was approved of and applauded: the people carried Galba's images, adorned with flowers and branches of laurel, to all the temples, and a pyramid of crowns in form of a tomb, was raised near the lake Curtius, on the spot where that prince had been murdered.

The senate, by one decree, granted Vitellius all the honours and privileges preceding emperors had not acquired but in a course of many years. Praises and thanks were likewise decreed the German armies, and deputies appointed to pay homage to Vitellius in the senate's name, and congratulate him on his accession to the throne. A letter from Valens to the consuls was read, couched in modest terms; but Cæcina's silence was judged still more modest.

Italy laid
waste by
the con-
querors.

Rome, as we see, did not at that time see the calamities of the war: but Italy suffered as much as if it had been a prey to foreign enemies. Vitellius's troops, dispersing themselves over the municipal towns and colonies, robbed, and plundered all, sparing neither sacred nor profane, adding to those excesses the most outrageous

ragious debauch. Not content to satisfy the A.R. 820.
various passions, which of themselves hurried A.C. 69.
them on to all sorts of crimes, they afforded
their cruel ministry to whoever was willing to
purchase it; and under colour of such univer-
sal licentiousness, citizens giving themselves
out for soldiers, killed their own private ene-
mies, whilst the soldiers who knew the country,
concerted schemes to ransack rich estates and
opulent houses, with a resolution to hew down
all before them in case of resistance. Their *
officers, weak, and absolute dependants on
them, did not dare to oppose their violence.
Cæcina, less covetous than his colleague, was
more vain, and more disposed to flatter the
soldier: Valens, noted for his own rapines,
winked at the faults of those who only followed
his example.

Vitellius did not learn his victory till he was Vitellius
in full march advancing towards Italy. He receives in
had with him all the forces that had been left Gaul the
on the Rhine, after the departure of Valens his Vic-
and Cæcina, adding to them considerable re- tory.
cruits raised in Gaul to keep up the appearance
and names of the legions, in fact reduced to a
small number of old soldiers. He joined to
his German troops a body of eight thousand
men levied in Britain, and set out, charging
Hordeonius Flaccus with the care of guarding
the borders of the river, and preventing the
inroads of the Germans. After marching some
days he received the news of the battle of Be-
driac,

* Obnoxiiis ducibus, & prohibere non ausis. Minus
avaritiæ in Cæcina, plus ambitionis: Valens ob lucra &
questus infamis, eoque alienæ etiam culpæ dissimulatur.
Tac.

A.R. 820. drian, and of Otho's death. His army being assembled by his order, was informed of what had passed, and the highest praises were given the troops to whom he was indebted for so signal a victory.

He makes
his free-
man Asia-
ticus a
knight.
Tec. Hist.
II. 57.
Suet. Vit.
12.

His freeman Asiaticus, who had a great ascendant over him, took advantage of that fortunate circumstance to lay the foundation of his future fortune. Some soldiers, gained over by his intrigues, and backed by all the rest, requested Vitellius to give him the golden ring. He had long been a favourite with his master, and that favour was originally founded on a reciprocal commerce of most execrable debauchery. The slave was first disgusted, and fled. Vitellius finding him again at Puzzola, put him in irons, and afterward sold him to a fencing-master, who travelled from town to town, amusing the people with combats of gladiators. Vitellius soon took him back from his new master, and being made proconsul of Germany, gave him his freedom. Such was the man for whom the Roman army requested the order of knighthood. Vitellius was himself ashamed of it, and vowed he would not dishonour the body of knights by giving them so unworthy a member. But weak, and void of resolution and principles, the very same day at table, he granted, at the intercession of his guests, what he had refused to the desires of his whole army. Asiaticus, thus raised from the meanest obscurity, made an insolent abuse of his power, and by his exactions, became one of the chief instruments of the public misery, till his master's fall pulled him down, as we shall observe in its proper place.

The

The whole empire acknowledged Vitellius. A.R. 820. A. C. 69. The legions of the east commanded by Mucian in Syria, and by Vespasian in Judea, swore allegiance to him. There was only a slight insurrection in Mauritania, where the intendant Luceius Albinus, finding himself at the head of a considerable body of troops, gave way to his ambition, and projected making himself master of the province, of which he had only a precarious government. Already his views extended to Spain too: but his vanity in aiming at the royal purple, and assuming the name of Juba, alienated the minds of all, and he was assassinated by his own partizans. Vitellius, content with that, made no farther enquiry about it. Incapable * of serious application, he would hardly bestow a moment's attention, even on the most important affairs.

So soon as he was informed of his victory, he left his troops to continue their march, and himself embarked on the Saone, without any retinue like an emperor, no officers of his household following, and being taken notice of for the indulgence of his first fortune more than for any thing else. Junius Blæsus, governor of the Lyonnoise, a man of great name, magnificent in his manners, and very rich, remedied the princes unbecoming situation, and brought him a train suitable to his rank. Vitellius, low and envious, instead of thinking himself obliged to Blæsus for that service, conceived an aversion to him, which however he concealed under ignoble fawnings and flattery.

Soon

* Brevi auditu quamvis magna transibat, impar curis gravioribus. Tac.

A.R. 820. Soon after his arrival at Lyons he was re-
 A.C. 69. joined by his army, which he ordered to go
 He gives and meet his son, a child, then coming from
 his son Rome to him. He received him in the camp,
 the name and in the presence of all the soldiers, took him
 of Germanicus, on his knees, wrapped him up in his military
 dress, and gave him the name of Germanicus,
 with a train becoming the son of an emperor :
 momentary honour, feeble compensation for
 the dire disgrace, both father and son were
 doomed to suffer within a few months.

His clemency towards the chiefs of the conquered party.

Vitellius found in Lyons the generals of his victorious armies, and the chiefs of the conquered party. He loaded Valens and Cæcina with honours, and seated them on each side of his curule chair. Suetonius Paulinus, and Licinius Proculus, did not obtain audience till after several delays and refusals ; and when they were admitted, humble and trembling, they made such a defence, as the character of the conqueror seemed to them to require, and forfeited their honours, to save their lives. They accused themselves of infidelity, and pretended they had contributed towards Vitellius's victory, by bringing up to battle Otho's troops whilst fatigued by a long march, and embarrassed by their equipages and carriages. Vitellius * took their words for it, and fidelity was pardoned under the mask of perfidy. Salvius Titianus, Otho's brother, was in no danger : his being so near a-kin, and his want of capacity were his safeguards. Nor does Marius Celsus seem to have met with greater difficulty. Perhaps Vitellius thought himself obliged

* Vitellius credidit de perfidia, & fidem absolvit. Tac.

obliged to him for the steps he had taken with the conquered legions, to appease their heat, and dispose them to a ready submission. He even continued him in his nomination to the consulship, to which Celsus had been destined by Nero or Galba, and confirmed in it by Otho. Galerius Trachalus was accused, but found a protectress in Galeria, Vitellius's wife, who seems to have been related to him.

Vitellius did not treat the subaltern officers with the same indulgence as he did their chiefs. He caused several captains, who had distinguished themselves by their zeal to Otho, to be killed. That severity did him great hurt, by adding to the disgust already conceived against him by the Illyrian legions, who soon after were the cause of his fall. However, he did not distress the families of those who were enemies to him, by forfeiture of their estates: what was left by such as died in battle, fighting for Otho, went to their heirs, or whoever they had named their executors.

Vitellius behaved in the same manner with regard to a rebellious multitude of fanatics, collected together in the country of the Boians, by one Maricus, a man of the lower class of the people, who took upon him the titles of Deliverer of the Gauls, and God the Saviour. That enthusiast, having assembled about eight thousand of his countrymen, spread his seduction as far as among the Eduans, and prevailed on some of their nearest cantons, to join his revolt: but the nation of the Eduans, one of the most powerful and illustrious in Gaul, stopt the progress of the evil, and with what troops,

A. R. 820
A. C. 69.

He caused several captains of that party to be killed.

A troop of fanatics dispersed,

A.R. 920. they raised of their own, together with a reinforcement of some cohorts sent by Vitellius, easily dispersed a confused crowd of ill-disciplined peasants. Maricus was taken prisoner, and exposed to wild beasts, who, not falling on to devour him, the silly vulgar already looked upon him as a man protected by the gods and invulnerable: but he did not prove such against the soldiers lances, with which he was ran through in Vitellius's presence. The death of the chief, put an end to the disturbance, and none of his followers were afterwards molested.

Vitellius's
gluttony.
Zonar.

Vitellius was not tyrannically greedy after money. He remitted the remainder of the imposts that had not yet been paid, and made no search after those who had received gratifications from his predecessors, but suffered them to enjoy what they had got in peace. Nor did he retain any hatred to the memory of Galba and Otho who had been his enemies, but let their coin, as well as Nero's, remain current. So far his conduct was not amiss, had he not disgraced all he did by a mixture of the meanest actions, and particularly by gluttony, his favourite passion, which he carried * to the greatest excess. He thought himself emperor only to eat. He made four meals regularly every day, and all of them very hearty ones; emptying, as I have said, his stomach by vomiting, that it might be always ready

Tac. Hist.
II. 62,
Suet. Vit.
13.
Dio.

* *Epularum fœda atque inexplebilis libido. Ex urbe atque Italia irritamenta gulæ gestabantur, frequentibus ab utroque mari itineribus. Exhausti conviviorum apparatus principes civitatum: vastabantur ipsæ civitates. Tac.*

ready to receive more. Every corner of the earth and sea was ransacked to find dainties for him. The countries through which he passed were ravaged; the chief inhabitants of the cities ruined by the excessive expences they were forced to be at to receive him. The day's expence was however divided among several; he dined with one and supped with another: but still it was a heavy tax upon them, for, an entertainment could not be offered him, that cost less than four * hundred thousand sesterces. * 32000. The companions of his feastings could not resist that kind of life; and Vibius Crispus falling ill, by which he was dispensed from being at those murderous entertainments, congratulated himself on it, saying, 'I should have been a dead man if I had not fallen sick.'

That I may have done with what relates to his monstrous gluttony, I shall add here a few instances out of Suetonius, and Dion Cassius. L. Vitellius gave the emporor his brother, an entertainment in which two thousand fish, and seven thousand of the nicest and most uncommon fowl were served up. The emperor himself made a solemn dedication of a silver dish, calling it on account of its prodigious size, Minerva's shield; and filled it with livers of a very scarce fish, brains of peacocks and pheasants, tongues of a red feathered bird, by the ancients called phœnicopterus, and roes of lampreys. That dish was kept as a remarkable monument, till the time of the emperor Adrian, who melted it down. The expence of such a table must have been enormous, as may be easily judged; Dion Cassius values it

A. R. 820. at nine * hundred millions of sesterces, which
 A. C. 69. make about seven millions two hundred thousand pounds of our money, for the eight months that Vitellius reigned. One would think his own table might have sufficed him, and that he need not have eat but at meals. But all times were alike to him. At sacrifices, he was ready to snatch the flesh of the victims and the sacred cakes off the coals. If he saw any cold broken victuals exposed to sale in the streets, he would lay hands on it, and eat as he went along. Discipline could not but be corrupted under such an emperor. The soldier, † imitating his example, at the same time that he despised his person, gave himself up to licentiousness, preferring pleasure to fatigue and valour.

That hatred might be added to contempt, Vitellius joined cruelty to his meanness. Tacitus seems to hint, that it was not out of inclination at first, but that ‡ he was induced to it by his brother's councils, and the lessons of tyranny given him by his courtiers. But he was of himself too susceptible of such impressions. Almost as stupid as Claudius, he had not his instinct of goodness; and his too grovelling soul was as prone to hatred as to fear.

He causes
 Dolabella
 to be killed.

Dolabella was the first instance of it. Heir to a great name, and related to Galba, by whom some thought he might have been adopted, he was for those reasons, as I have said

* Tacitus speaks of the same sum, Hist. II. 95. but includes in it all Vitellius's mad expences.

† Degenerabat a labore ac virtute miles, assuetudine voluptatum, & contemptu ducis. Tac.

‡ Adventu fratris, & in repentibus dominationis magister superbiior & atrocior. Tac.

said, obnoxious to Otho, who banished him to ^{A.R. 820.} Aquinum. Dolabella thinking himself at liberty ^{A. C. 69.} by Otho's death, returned to Rome. Plautius Varus, an ancient prætor, and one of his most intimate friends, was base enough to accuse him on that account before Flavius Sabinus, prefect of Rome, and to tax him with having set himself at liberty, with a view to shew the conquered a chief ready to head them. He charged him likewise with having attempted to bribe the cohort that guarded Ostium. Those allegations were destitute of all proof, and the accuser himself, touched with remorse of conscience, retracted his calumnies, and endeavoured, but too late, to repair the mischief he had done. Flavius Sabinus was greatly perplexed, and knew not well what step to take. Triaria, wife of L. Vitellius, a woman more imperious and violent than is usual with her sex, terrified him by her talk, and made him sensible of the danger to which he would expose himself, by attempting to shew his lenity at the expence of the prince's safety. Sabinus, * naturally humane, but weak and easily frightened, pushed him down the precipice, by greatly exaggerating the circumstances of his affair in the account he gave of it to the emperor, in order to avoid all suspicion of favouring Dolabella.

I have already said, that Petronia, first married to Vitellius, but parted from him, was afterwards married to Dolabella. Vitellius owed him an old grudge for that: he likewise feared

* Sabinus suoapte ingenio mitis, ubi formido incessisset, facilis mutatu, & in alieno discrimine sibi pavens, ne alle-vasse videretur, impulit ruentem. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. feared him, and therefore resolved to get rid of an odious and formidable rival. He sent for Dolabella, and gave private instructions to the officer who was to bring him, to carry him round by Interamna, and kill him in that town. The assassin, thinking that too great a delay, murdered him in the first inn where they stopt. This act of cruelty gave a bad idea of the new government, which already began to take such steps.

Modesty of
Vitellius's
wife and
mother.

Triaria * bore a great share of the public indignation. Her audaciousness was the more shocking, by the contrast between it, and the mildness of Galeria the emperor's wife, who carefully avoided every thing that could add to the misery of the unfortunate: and Sextilia, Vitellius's mother, was likewise admired for her virtues, worthy the best of times. The first letters she received from her son, when emperor, being signed with the name Germanicus, she said, she had never born a Germanicus, and that her son's name was Vitellius. Nor could the high rank to which she was raised, nor the assiduity with which all Rome paid court to her, ever make her forget the modesty of her station. Inaccessible to joy, she felt nought but the misfortunes of her family.

Cluvius

* Triariæ licentiam modestum ex propinquo exemplum onerabat, Galeria imperatoris uxor, non minax tristibus: et pari probitate mater Vitelliorum Sextilia, antiqui moris. Dixisse quin etiam ad primas filii sui epistolas ferebatur, non Germanicum a se, sed Vitellium genitum. Nec ullis postea fortunæ illecebris, aut ambitu civitatis in gaudium eversa, domus suæ tantum adversa sensit. Tac.

Cluvius Rufus, proconsul of Spain, joined A.R. 820. Vitellius who had left Lyons. He was not A.C. 69. without uneasiness, well knowing attempts had been made to blacken and render him suspected, as having balanced and been in doubt between the two contenders for the empire, with a secret design to form himself an independent establishment in Spain. Cluvius was a man of sense and talents, he was rich and powerful; and prevailed so far, that he obtained the punishment of his accuser who was one of the prince's freemen. However, he was not sent back to his government; which would make one suspect, if Tacitus did not positively assure the contrary, that some doubt still remained in Vitellius's mind. However that may be, Cluvius remained near the emperor, and governed Spain some time longer without residing there.

Cluvius
accused,
obtains the
punish-
ment of his
accuser.
Tac. Hist.
II. 65.

Trebellius Maximus, commander of the legions in Britain, was not treated so honourably. His army having rebelled, he had been forced to fly, and lay his complaints before Vitellius. They were not heeded, and he was succeeded by Vectius Bolanus, a man little able to restore discipline among seditious troops, but * exempt from vice, an enemy to all injustice and oppression, and who, if he did not know how to make his authority be respected, at least made his person beloved.

Vectius
Bolanus
sent to
command
the legions
in Britain.

The haughtiness of the conquered legions gave Vitellius uneasiness. Their forced submission seemed only to wait for an opportunity to shake off the yoke of constraint, and rebel. To leave those troops together might have been

Vitellius
separates
the con-
quered le-
gions, and
removes
them from
Italy.

* *Innocens Bolanus, & nullis delictis in visu, caritatem paraverat loco auctoritatis. Tac. Agr. 16.*

A. R. 820. been dangerous: accordingly they were sepa-
 A. C. 69. rated. The fourteenth legion, which seemed
 the most intractable, and even pretended not
 to have been conquered, because in fact only a
 detachment of it was engaged in the battle of
 Bedriac, was sent back to Britain from whence
 Nero had drawn it. The others were likewise
 removed from Italy, and sent to various re-
 mote parts; the thirteenth excepted, which was
 ordered to build amphitheatres at Cremona
 and Bologna, for combats of gladiators, which
 Valens and Cæcina were to give in those two
 cities. For * Vitellius was never so much taken
 up with business, as to forget pleasure. The
 Batavian cohorts, who were almost at open war
 with the fourteenth legion, were at first ordered
 to march with it: the design was, that their
 frequent wranglings might bring on some op-
 portunity of taming its haughtiness. They
 acquitted themselves but too well of their com-
 mission; for in Turin, an accident reviving the
 mutual hatred between them and the legion,
 the quarrel was very near being decided by
 arms. It was therefore necessary to separate
 those troops, and the Batavian cohorts were
 sent to Germany, where we shall find them
 become the chief support of Civilis's rebellion.
 As to the prætorians, who had been strongly,
 attached to Otho, Vitellius broke them, but
 without ignominy, for fear of irritating them
 too much: though that did not prevent their
 taking arms afterwards in favour of Vespasian,
 to whose party they added a considerable
 strength.

He breaks
 the præto-
 rians.

Vitellius

* Nunquam ita ad curas intento Vitellio, ut voluptates
 oblivisceretur. *Tac. Hist. II. 67.*

Vitellius behaved very properly with regard A.R. 820. to the conquered legions: but the licentious- A.C. 69. ness in which his own armies were indulged, Corrupt discipline was the cause of infinite evils. Their * chief among the victorious troops. being perpetually drunk, and minding nothing but eating and drinking, all his attendants were like Bacchanalians, his officers imitated his example, and the soldiers that of their officers. Thence arose all manner of outrages, Suet. Vict. 10. committed by these licentious troops in all the countries through which they passed; people were carried off by force, lands plundered, and every act of violence and cruelty that could be thought of was perpetrated; at all which Vitellius only laughed when he was told of it. Tac. Hist. II. 68. But at last the fury of the undisciplined soldiers turned against themselves. A violent sedition broke out on Vitellius's arrival at Pavia: the first occasion of it was a meer frolic, but it soon became a bloody battle. The thing happened thus.

One of the legionary soldiers, and a Gaul Sedition among them and a bloody battle. belonging to the auxiliary troops, challenged each other to wrestle, by way of exercise. The Gaul throwing his adversary, insulted over his fallen enemy, and the spectators, who were numerous, interfered. They soon grew hot, and each side running to arms, the legionaries cut to pieces and exterminated two cohorts. The slaughter would not have stopt there, had not a cloud of dust, and a body of armed

* Legati tribunique ex moribus imperatorum severitatem emulantur, vel tempestivis conviviis gaudent. Perinde miles intentus, aut licentur agit. Apud Vitellium omnia indisposita, temulenta, pervigiliis et bacchanalibus, quam disciplinæ et castris, propiora. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. armed men been descried at a distance coming
 A. C. 69. towards them. They concluded it was the
 fourteenth legion returning back to attack the
 camp, and give them battle. The common
 danger calmed both parties, and separated the
 combatants. They found their mistake, after
 it had produced that salutary effect: what they
 had taken for a body of enemies, proved to be
 only the rear-guard of the army.

Seditious
 insurrec-
 tion against
 Virginius.

The insuperable and restless ardour of the
 soldiers, only changed its object. Vitellius
 was at table with Virginius, when on a sudden
 the mutineers took it into their heads to ac-
 cuse a slave they met with, belonging to the
 latter, of having been posted there to kill the
 emperor, and with loud cries demanded his
 master's death. As suspicious as Vitellius's
 cowardice made him, he could not form the
 least doubt of Virginius's innocence, and yet
 could not without difficulty screen him from
 the danger he was in. Virginius was the butt
 of every sedition. The * soldiers admired and
 respected his virtue, but could not forgive the
 pretended affront he had put upon them, in re-
 fusing to accept the empire from their hands.

Vitellius seemed to invite them to continue
 their rage. For the next day, after giving au-
 dience to the senate's deputies, whom he had
 ordered to wait for him at Pavia, he went to
 the camp; and instead of blaming the excessive
 audaciousness of the soldiers, praised their zeal
 and attachment to him; to the great mortifica-
 tion of the auxiliary troops, who were grieved
 to

* *Manebat admiratio viri et fama; sed oderant, ut fasti-
 giti. Tac.*

to see the arrogance of the legionaries encouraged by impunity. A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.

The war seeming to be quite at an end, Vitellius thought of disbanding his troops, of which he had a prodigious multitude, whose maintenance exhausted the public funds, and disabled the emperor from paying the gratifications he had promised. In the first place he dismissed all the Gaulish militia, raised, as Tacitus thinks, rather to make a shew, than to be of any real service. He afterwards reduced the old corps, both legions and auxiliaries, to a smaller number: he forbid recruiting, and offered leave to quit the service, to whoever chose it. Tacitus blames that management *, as hurtful to the republic; whose strength was thereby diminished; and disagreeable to the soldiers, whose fatigue it increased, because the same duty being to be done by a smaller number, each man's turn came oftener round. What was saved by it, does not seem an equivalent, to that historian, who appeals to the old maxims, according to which, valour, and not money, was thought the support of the state.

From Pavia, Vitellius went to Cremona, where Cæcina had prepared a feast and combat of gladiators for him. His barbarous curiosity wanted to enjoy another sight, to which end he went to the plains of Bedriac, to feast his eyes

* Exitabile id reipublicæ, ingratum militi, cui eadem munia inter paucos, periculaque ac labor crebrius redibant: et vires luxu corrumpébantur: contra veterem disciplinam, et instituta majorum, apud quos virtute, quam pecunia, res Romana melius stetit. Tac.

A. R. 320. eyes with the proofs of his victory : And * a
 A. C. 69. dreadful sight it must have been, to behold,
 forty days after the action, a field of battle covered with scattered limbs, headless bodies, arms, legs, horses and men rotting all together, the earth stained with black and callous blood, fertile lands laid quite waste, trees cut down, and the harvest destroyed. In the midst of those dismal and hideous ruins, the Cremonians, as if to insult humanity, had strewed the ways with roses and branches of laurel, and erected altars from space to space, burning incense on them, and offering up victims : but their great joy, their fervent congratulations, were soon turned into bitterness of grief and tears. Valens and Cæcina accompanied Vitellius every where, and shewed him the most remarkable parts of the field of battle. “ Here
 “ the legions fought : there, the cavalry : and
 “ on that side the auxiliary troops coming up,
 “ charged the enemy’s flank.” The officers, speaking of their own exploits, strove to outboast each other, exaggerating what was true, and adding many falsities. The soldiers giving way to their noisy tumultuous joy, ran to have another sight of the spot where they had fought, and beheld with admiration the heaps of arms and dead bodies. Some † however, could

* *Fœdum atque atrox spectaculum, intra quadragessimum pugnae diem, lacerata corpora, trunci artus, putres virorum equorumque formæ, infecta tabo humus, protritæ arboribus atque frugibus, dira vastitas. Nec minus inhumana pars viæ, quam Cremonenses lauro rosisque constraverant, exstructis altaribus, cæsisque victimis, regium in morem : quæ læta in præsens, mox perniciem ipsis fecere. Tac.*

† *Et erant quos varia sors rerum, lacrymæque, et misericordia*

could not help being moved and shedding ^{A.R. 320.} tears at so strong an image of the instability of ^{A. C. 69.} human grandeur. But Vitellius shewed not the least sign of compassion: his eyes wandered over every part of the dreadful scene: he felt no emotion at the sight of so many thousand citizens deprived of burial. So far from ^{Suet. Vit. 10.} it, that when some who were with him complained of the stench of the dead bodies, he chid them, saying, the smell * of a dead enemy, and especially of a citizen, was a perfume. He ^{Tac.} was ignorant of the fatal destiny that awaited himself within a few months, and by his conduct then, prevented mankind from pitying him afterwards. Full of ideas of prosperity and triumph, he offered up sacrifices to the guardian gods of the place. He likewise visited Otho's tomb, which he found plain and modest enough to be spared: and looking on the dagger with which his enemy had killed himself, as a trophy of his victory, he sent it to Cologne, with orders to consecrate and hang it up there in the temple of Mars.

Valens in his turn treated Vitellius at Bo- ^{Tac.} logna, with a combat of gladiators brought from Rome. The nearer he drew towards the city, the more that emperor's court was corrupted by a mixture of actors, eunuchs, and all the train that had been subservient to Nero's pleasures, who thought they had found another Nero in Vitellius: for he professed great admiration

cordia subiret. At non Vitellius flexit oculos, nec tot millia insepulorum civium exhorruit. Lætus ultro, et tam propinque sortis ignarus, instaurabat sacrum diis loci. Tac.

* *Optime olere occisum hostem, et melius civem. Suet.*

A. R. 820. admiration for Nero, whose madness after music and theatrical entertainments he had flattered, not of necessity, as many others had done, but out of a low grovelling meanness. His veneration for that monster was so great, that on his arrival in Rome, he, with the priests of Augustus's college, made for him the solemn offerings with which it was customary to honour the dead.

Tac. Hist.
II. 95. &
Suet. Vit.
11.

Order for-
bidding
Roman
knights to
fight as
gladiators.
Tac. Hist.
II. 62.

His behaviour on that occasion proves it was not out of any sincere regard to decency, that he had some little time before forbid, under severe penalties, the Roman knights frequenting the schools of gladiators, or appearing in that character. Preceding princes had often even forced some, who disliked so dangerous an ignominy, to fight publicly: and that bad example had spread like a contagion, from the capital to other cities. The abuse was great and abominable: but it ill became Vitellius to act the part of a reformer: and indeed, the order of which I am speaking, must rather be imputed to the advice of others, or to the care every new government never fails to take, to get a good character at first.

Another
order a-
gainst
astrologers.
Their in-
solence.
Emptiness
of their art.
Tac. Ibid.
Suet. Vit.
14.
Dio.

From the same source undoubtedly proceeded an edict of Vitellius's against astrologers, though he was himself extremely credulous, and addicted to believe in their predictions. The insolence of those impostors was so great, that they ventured to post up a placart against the prince's order. The edict commanding them to leave Italy before the first of October, they in return, commanded him to leave the world before that day. The emptiness of their art was as flagrant on that occasion, as their im-
pudence;

puddence; for Vitellius was not killed till the month of December was far advanced. A. R. 820
A. C. 69.

Valens and Cæcina well deserved from Vitellius the honour of being consuls. But though the exercise of that high office was then limited to a very short space of time, it was not easy to find room for them, the whole year being taken up with Nero's, Galba's, and Otho's nominations. Three of those who had been appointed, were deprived of their right under various pretences; and the vacancies, occasioned by their removal, filled up by Valens and Cæcina who were consuls together, and by Cecilius Simplex whom we shall find in that station at the time of Vitellius's death. Those * whose nominations were set aside, did not however fail to return the prince thanks for the injustice he did them; so great was the ascendant servitude had gained over them.

Vitellius advanced towards Rome but slowly, stopping at every town, and pretty country seat he met with, to enjoy all the pleasures he could, making himself every day more despicable, by the stupid idleness to which he devoted himself. Whilst he thought only of diverting himself, he spread desolation wherever he passed. He was followed by sixty thousand armed men, who knew neither order nor discipline, and dragged after them a still greater number of servants, who always are more insolent and audacious than their masters. The general officers, and Vitellius's friends, had numerous trains of attendants, whom it would have been difficult to keep within bounds, had they been watched with ever so great care.

To

* Actæ insuper Vitellio gratiæ, consuetudine servitii. Tac.

A. R. 320. To this multitude were added, the senators
 A. C. 69. and Roman knights who came to meet the
 emperor, some out of fear, more out of flattery,
 but all, that a bad construction might not be
 put on their staying behind whilst others went.
 Add * to these, a crowd of the lowest class of
 people, who, by their profession, consecrated
 to pleasure, had formerly been unbekomingly
 intimate with Vitellius, strollers, comedians,
 and coachmen. He received them graciously,
 and took a pleasure in prostituting the name
 of friend to those wretches, the very know-
 ledge of whom was enough to dishonour him.
 One may judge what waste must have been
 committed by such a troop in the towns and
 countries where they passed, at a time when
 the harvest was just ready to be gathered in.
 An army of enemies would have been less for-
 midable.

A great
 number of
 the com-
 mon people
 butchered
 by the sol-
 diers.

The soldiers had several quarrels on the
 road. The legions and auxiliary troops had
 never agreed since the affair of Pavia, except
 when they were jointly concerned in plunder-
 ing towns, or molesting such as were not sol-
 diers. The greatest havock was made about
 seven miles from Rome. Vitellius distributed,
 contrary to custom, wine and victuals to each
 soldier, and the city mob was spread all over
 the camp. Among that crowd, brought thi-
 ther by an idle curiosity, were some jokers, who
 diverted themselves with disarming the soldiers,
 privately cutting their belts, and then asking
 whether they had got their swords. Too hot
 and

* *Aggregabantur e plebe, flagitiosa per obsequia Vitellii
 cogniti, scurrae, histriones, aurigae, quibus ille amicitiarum
 de honestamentis mure gaudebat. Tac.*

and brutal to understand raillery, and taking for an insult, what was meant only as a jest, they fell, sword in hand, on the people, who had neither swords nor any thing else to defend themselves with. Several of them were killed, among whom was the father of one of the soldiers. He was known after his death. The most furious were ashamed of what they had done; and, recollecting themselves, spared an innocent multitude.

They occasioned too some trouble and confusion in Rome, whither they ran in small detachments from the main army, out of curiosity to see the spot where Galba had been murdered. Their appearance was so savage one could not look at them without shuddering. Their great long pikes, and the skins of beasts with which they were clothed, made them look more like barbarians than Roman soldiers. Not being used to the city, they could not tell how to avoid the crowds, and if by slipping on the stones, or justling against any one, they chanced to fall, they immediately drew their swords, and fell on whoever was next them. The tribunes and other officers, who purposely went through the streets with proper guards, could not appease the tumult, but rather added to the general terror.

Vitellius made a solemn entry into Rome. He set out from Ponte-mole, mounted on a fine horse, and completely armed. His design was to enter the city, as a place taken in war, as he had done in the other cities through which he passed. His friends dissuaded him from so foolish and odious a thought: he laid aside the military dress, put on the robe præ-

Terror and
confusion
in Rome.

Vitellius's
entry into
Rome.

Suet. Vit.
10.
Tac.

A.R. 820. texta, and marched with a warlike pomp in-
A. C. 69. deed, but without any menacing appearance.

First marched the eagles of four legions, with numbers of colours and standards on each side of them. Next followed the Roman infantry, then the horse, and last of all four and thirty cohorts of auxiliary troops, their various armour distinguishing their several nations. The prefects of the camp, general officers, tribunes, and chief centurions preceded the eagles in white robes. The other centurions were at the head of their companies, dressed in their finest armour, and decked with the military ornaments each of them had acquired. The soldiers too displayed the sashes and gorgets they had received as rewards for their bravery. A great * and noble sight! a fine and magnificent army, worthy to be commanded by a better man than Vitellius! In that manner he marched to the capitol, where he found his mother: whom he embraced, and gave her the name of Augusta.

He har-
angues the
senate and
people.

The next day † he harangued the senate and people, sounding his own praise with as much confidence, as if none who heard him knew what he was: boasting his activity and temperance in the most pompous terms, whilst every one present, as well as all Italy, through which he

* *Decora facies, & non Vitellio principe dignus exercitus!*

Tac.

† *Postera die, tamquam apud alterius civitatis senatum populumque, magnificam orationem de semetipso prompsit, industriam temperantiamque suam laudibus attollens: consociis flagitiorum ipsis qui aderant, omnique Italia, per quam somno & luxu pudendus inceserat. Vulgus tamen vacuum curis, & sine falsi verique discrimine, solitas adulationes edoctum, clamore & vocibus adstrepebat. Tac.*

he had travelled either sleeping or drunk all the way, had been witnesses to the shameful meanness of his behaviour. They applauded however; and the populace, to whom it is equal whether a thing be true or false, accustomed to echo the flatteries to which they had been trained up, clapped their hands, redoubled their acclamations, and at last prevailed on him to accept the title of Augustus, with as little reason as he had had to refuse it before.

Vitellius having taken possession of the high priesthood, issued according to custom, an edict concerning the public worship and religious ceremonies, and dated it the fifteenth of the calends of August, or eighteenth of July, a day always thought unfortunate, being that on which Cremerus and Allia were defeated. We well know what an idle superstition that of fortunate and unfortunate days is; but the Romans thought otherways: and that date was looked upon as a bad omen. It might easily have been foreseen and prevented, but Vitellius * did not attend to it. Profoundly ignorant of all laws, both human and divine, he had a parcel of friends and freemen as indolent and negligent as himself, and his council seemed to be composed of nothing but drunkards.

He affected to be extremely popular. At elections for magistrates, he went with the candidates as their friend and solicitor. At the theatres, he was sure to favour such actors, as he thought most agreeable to the mob. In

* Adeo omnis humani divinique juris experts, pari amicorum libertorumque socordia, velut inter temulentos agebat. Tac.

An instance of stupid negligence.

At He affects to be meanly popular. Tac. Hist. II. 91.

A. R. 820. the circus he espoused the blue faction, as warmly as he had done when but a private man. A. C. 69. ly as he had done when but a private man. A conduct *, says Tacitus, which, had it been directed by judgment, might have pleased, as plain and simple : but the remembrance of his past life made it seem mean and indecent.

He attends the senate assiduously, and behaves there with modesty.
Tac.

He attended the senate assiduously, even when no affairs of moment were to be debated. Helvidius Priscus, with his usual freedom and liberty, strongly opposed Vitellius's opinion on some occasion : the prince was piqued at it ; but however only called the tribunes to back his authority so contemned. Helvidius's friends, fearing Vitellius would never forgive it, strove to appease him. He answered, that it was neither new nor surprising for two senators to be of different opinions ; and that he himself had often contradicted Thræsea. Various constructions were put on that answer. Some thought it impudent in Vitellius to compare himself to Thræsea : others commended him for having chosen, since he would give an example, a senator so respectable for his virtue, and not one of fortune's favourites.

Enormous power of Valens and Cæcina, and their jealousies.

Valens and Cæcina shared † all the power, and left Vitellius only the shadow of it. Of the

* Quæ grata sane & popularia, si a virtutibus proficiscerantur, memoria vitæ prioris indecora & vilia accipiebantur. *Tac.*

† Inter discordes Vitellio nihil auctoritatis : munia imperii Cæcina ac Valens obibant, olim anxii odiis, quæ bello & castris male dissimulata, pravitas amicorum, & secunda gignendis inimiciis civitas auxerat, dum ambitu, comitatu, & immensis salutantium agminibus contendunt, comparanturque, variis in hunc aut illum Vitellii inclinationibus. Nec unquam satis fida potentia, ubi nimia est. Simul ipsum Vitellium, subitis offensis aut intempestivis blanditiis, mutabilem, contemnebant, metuebantque. *Tac.*

the two prætorian prefects whom he named, ^{A. R. 820.} P. Sabinus, and Julius Priscus, the one was ^{A. C. 69.} protected by Cæcina, and the other by Valens. In that manner they counterbalanced each other on all occasions. Their jealousy, which began during the war, in the camp, and was even then so badly disguised, that none were deceived, at last broke out in the city, where they were more at leisure to lend an ear to the malicious speeches and envious reports of those who called themselves their friends; and where they could not but have frequent opportunities of thwarting each other. Add to that, their emulation for shew and ostentation, their attempts to surpass each other in the magnificence of their equipages, the number of their dependants and the immense multitude of those who made court to them. Rivals in every thing, each strove to bring the emperor over to his side, whilst he, a poor weak idol, obeyed sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. Their situation was consequently as precarious, as it was brilliant; and as they well knew the least sudden start of pleasure, or on the contrary, a flattery, however absurd and ill-timed, was capable of making Vitellius change at once, so they despised and feared him equally. It was an additional motive to them to strive to grow rich as fast as they could whilst in favour. They possessed themselves of houses, gardens, and lands, belonging to the imperial demesnes, whilst numbers of nobles, recalled from exile by Galba, languished in indigence, without receiving any assistance from the prince's liberality.

All

A.R. 820.

A. C. 69.

Vitellius's
order in fa-
vour of the
nobility re-
called from
exile.

*Lisp. ad
Tac.*

Tac.

The disci-
pline of the
victorious
legions en-
tirely cor-
rupted by
their abode
in Rome.
*Tac. Hist.
II. 93.*

All that Vitellius did for those unfortunate men, was to restore them to their prerogatives over their freemen. Those prerogatives were considerable. If the master or patron wanted the necessaries of life, the freemen was obliged to keep him, and to leave him at his death, half of what he was worth. Vitellius's law was extremely applauded by all ranks of people, but the freemen found out ways to evade it. Those servile creatures thought of various tricks to conceal their riches, putting their money out under borrowed names. Some of them getting into the emperor's household, became more powerful than their old masters.

The discipline of the victorious legions had already been greatly impaired, but their abode in Rome corrupted them entirely. The soldiers, too numerous to be well contained within the camp, over-run the city. They strutted about in the streets, porticos, and temples: they had no longer any notion of repairing to their head-quarters to take orders from their chief officers: no exactness in their military duties, no exercise was used to keep them employed. The * pleasures of the city, and all manner of excesses into which they gave, impaired their strength, and enervated their courage. At last neglecting even such precautions as were necessary for their health, several of them pitched their tents in the Vatican, an unwholesome place, where the badness of the air, occasioned sicknesses of which many died. Strangers, and especially the Germans and Gauls, who never could bear the climate of Italy,

* *Per urbis illecebras & inhonesta dictu, corpus otio, animi libidinibus imminuebant. Tac.*

Italy, were greatly hurt by drinking the water A. R. 820. of the Tiber, which they did to excess, when A. C. 69. over-heated.

One only way remained to ruin that army ^{Sixteen} completely, which was, to lessen the number ^{prætorian,} of soldiers of which it was composed ; and that ^{and four} was most imprudently done. * I have already ^{city co-} said that Vitellius broke the prætorians, and it ^{horts, form-} appears he did the same with the troops more ^{ed out of} particularly destined to guard the city. The ^{the Ger-} question was how to replace them. To that ^{man troops.} end the emperor ordered sixteen prætorian and four city cohorts, each consisting of a thousand men, to be raised. Every one strove to get into that service, which was less troublesome, and at the same time more lucrative than that of the legions. Favour, or the caprice of the generals, was what determined the choice of those who were to be admitted. Valens in particular, assumed the chief authority to the prejudice of Cæcina, over whom he had the ascendant with the soldiers who imputed to him the victory they had gained, and the flourishing condition of their party, which was but in a bad way before his arrival. Cæcina's jealousy knew no longer any bounds, and from that hour his fidelity began to waver.

But if Vitellius let the generals take so great a power, he granted still more to the licentiousness of the soldier. Every man placed himself as he pleased : worthy or not worthy, all that chose to enlist in the prætorian or city cohorts were received : those who liked better to remain in the legions or auxiliary troops were likewise at liberty so to do ; and some preferred those corps, to avoid the intempera-
ture

A.R. 820. ture of the climate, and danger of being sick.

A. C. 69. The result of that operation was, that the army was considerably weakened ; and the prætorian as well as city cohorts; who, till then had been honoured and esteemed for their excellence, lost that noble distinction, and became a confused medley of all sorts of people.

The soldiers demand the death of the most illustrious chiefs of the Gauls.

The soldiers audaciousness was such, that they thought they might do any thing. They had even the assurance to demand with loud cries, the death of three of the most illustrious chiefs of Gaul, because they had sided with Vindex in his insurrection just before Nero's death.— Vitellius, besides his being naturally weak and cowardly, had a very strong reason to flatter the troops. The time was drawing near when he was to reward their zeal by giving them a sum of money, which not having, he thought it best to indulge them in every thing else.— So Tacitus says, giving us by that to understand, that those whose deaths the soldiers required were delivered up to their fury.

Foolish extravagance

A tax was laid on the freemen, whose enormous riches was an insult to the public. But that was a poor resource for a * prince who thought of nothing but squandering away his money, building stables for the horses belonging to the Circus ; giving incessantly combats of gladiators and fights of wild beasts ; who in a word threw his riches away, as if there could have been no end to them. Cæcina and Valens followed his example, and celebrated his birthday with such splendour and expence as had never

* Ipse sola perdendi cura, stabula aurigis exstruere ; circum gladiatorum ferarumque spectaculis opplere : tamquam in summa abundantia pecuniæ illudere. Tac.

never before been heard of. They hired gladiators to fight in all the streets of Rome to amuse the people. A.R. 820.
A.C. 69.

Rapine and extravagance went hand in hand. Misery of
Rome.
Four months * had not yet past since the victory, and the freeman Asiaticus already equalled the odious fortunes of the richest of Nero's freemen. Not one in this court valued himself on honour or honesty. The only way to attain power and authority was, to feed with all that luxury and the most monstrous prodigality could invent, the insatiable gluttony of Vitellius, who thought of nothing but enjoying the present moment. The city of Rome, not more great and powerful than unhappy, in the course of one single year, fell into the hands of Otho and Vitellius, and became a prey to a Vinus, an Icelus, a Valens, and an Asiaticus, one after the other: and they, says Tacitus, were soon succeeded by other, but not better men, a Mucian, and an Eprius Marcellus.

They were in fact the chief ministers under Vespasian's government. But though they were by no means blameless, I fear Tacitus has carried things too far in comparing them to Galba's and Vitellius's ministers and freemen.—Vespasian, a wise and careful prince, on whom even

* Nondum quartus a victoria mensis, & libertus Vitellii Asiaticus, Polycleto, Patrobio, & vetera odiorum nomina æquabat. Nemo in illa aula probitate aut industria certavit. Unum ad potentiam iter, prodigis epulis, & sumptu gæaque satiare inexplēbiles Vitellii libidines Magna & misera civitas, eodem anno Othonem Vitelliumque passa, inter Vinios, Fabios, Icelos, Asiaticos, varia & pudenda sorte agebat: donec succedere Mucianus & Marcellus, & magis alii homines, quam alii mores. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. even our historian bestows great praises, un-
 A. C. 69. doubtedly bore a great deal from Mucian, to
 whom he was indebted for the empire: per-
 haps too, he confided over much in Eprius
 Marcellus: but he never would have suffered
 either of them to be guilty of the enormities
 practised under preceding reigns.

Vitellius's
 cruelties.
Suet. Vit.
 14.

To so many evils which threatened the speedy
 ruin of the republic, Vitellius added cruelty
 against private persons. Old friends, with
 whom he had been intimate from his infancy,
 men of great names whom he had invited to
 be with him, promising almost to share the
 empire with them, met with nothing but fraud
 and deceit, to which they fell victims. He
 spared no one of his creditors, nor of those
 who had formerly molested him in any shape
 whatever, for payment of what he owed them.
 One of them waiting on him to pay his court,
 was directly ordered to be taken away, and put
 to death. As he was carrying off, Vitellius
 called him back: and, whilst every one was
 praising his clemency, ordered the unhappy
 man to be stabbed before him, saying, he
 would feast his eyes with the sight of an ene-
 my's blood. Two sons beseeching him to
 spare their father's life, were put to death with
 him. A Roman knight cried out to him as
 they were dragging him to execution by his
 order, "I have made you my heir." Vitellius
 ordered the will to be brought, and finding by
 it one of the testator's freemen was made co-
 heir with him, he ordered them both to be kill-
 ed. If any spoke loud against his favourite
 faction, he blew, in the Circus, he called it
 treason,

treason, and several citizens lost their lives for A. R. 820, no other reason. A. C. 69.

It was time Vespasian should come to put a stop to all those horrors, and save the empire by reigning over it. The schemes he had long meditated, at last succeeded in the manner I am about to relate, after taking some notice of his birth and first employments.

His birth was far from promising the high Birth, and first em- fortune to which he attained. T. Flavius Pen-ployments tro, a burgess of Rieti, his grandfather by his of Vespasian. father's side, took to the army in his youth, Suet. Vesp. but never rose higher than the rank of centu-1—4. rion: and quitting the service after the battle of Pharsalia, in which he fought for Pompey, spent the rest of his life in the little town where he was born, setting up a business like that of our brokers and auctioneers. Vespasian's father, T. Flavius Sabinus, farmed the impost of the * fortieth penny in Asia; and behaved in that ticklish employment with such lenity and integrity, that several towns would have his picture, under which they put this inscription, *Καλῶ τελωνίασι*, *To the honest publican*. His mother, Vespasia Polla, was of an honourable family of † Ursia, and had a brother a senator.

He was born at a village near Rieti, the seventeenth of November in the year of Rome 760, five years before Augustus's death. A surname taken from his mother's name was given him, so that he was called T. Flavius Vespasianus. He had an elder brother, called after his father T. Flavius Sabinus: he was brought

* *A tax or duty levied on all kinds of merchandise.*

† *Still called by its old name Noccia in Umbria.*

A. R. 820. brought up by his father's mother Tertulla, at
A. C. 69. an estate she had near * Cosa in Tuscany. He was always fond of the places where he had spent his infancy. He often paid them a visit when emperor, and let the little farm-house subsist just as it was, being unwilling to make any alteration in objects the sight of which gave him real joy. He had always the highest veneration for the memory of his grandmother, and on high days drank out of a silver cup that had been her's.

His brother set out in the road to preferment, and succeeded; for he was made consul, and afterwards prefect of Rome under Nero, Otho, and Vitellius. As to Vespasian, he had no ambition; and, could he have followed his own inclination, would have avoided all dignities and promotions: but forced by his mother, who, to her counsels and earnest entreaties added strong and bitter reproaches, calling him his brother's footman, he set about obtaining an entrance into the senate. It was not without great difficulty, and after being refused, that he was made edile; but he obtained the prætorship with ease and honour.

The strides he took in that career, were very different from what might have been expected from the reluctance with which he entered it. He was guilty of every meanness in order to gain Caligula's good graces. He desired leave to treat the people with a feast and games to celebrate that prince's chimerical victory over the Germans. When Lepidus's conspiracy was discovered, he proposed depriving the criminals.

* The Cosa of the ancients was not far from Porto Hercole.

criminals of burial, besides putting them to ^{A.R. 820.} death. He made a speech before the whole ^{A. C. 69.} senate, for the honour he had received in being admitted to the emperor's table. So difficult it is for merit to make its way without stooping to some things not quite compatible with strict virtue and dignity of sentiment.

It was at that time that he married, and therein made a choice more suitable to the obscurity of his birth, than the rank he was then in. He married Domitia, a cast off mistress of a Roman knight, and generally thought to have been originally a slave. She was however declared by sentence of the judge, free by birth, and a citizen : having been acknowledged by her father Flavius Liberalis, register to the office of quæstors. Money must have been what induced Vespasian to contract such an alliance. He had by her Titus and Domitian, and a daughter called Domitilla, who died before him. He buried his wife, and did not marry again, but took Cænis, Antonia's free-woman and secretary, whom he had formerly loved ; and even when he was emperor, kept her with him, almost on the footing of a lawful wife. Cænis dying, several mistresses succeeded her, for chastity was not the favourite virtue of the Pagans.

Vespasian advanced himself greatly under Claudius. He was protected by Narcissus, and by his means got the command of a legion with which he served, first in Germany, and afterwards in Britain, where he behaved with great distinction. The ornaments of triumph, a double priesthood, and at last the consulship, were his reward.

He

A. R. 820. He lived retired and inactive during the first
 A. C. 69. years of Nero's reign, studying only how to be
 forgot, because he feared Agrippina, who hated
 all Narcissus's friends. He was made procon-
 sul of Africa in his turn. His behaviour there
 seems to have been a mixture of good and ill;
 for Suetonius and Tacitus speak very diffe-
Tac. Hist. rently of it. According to Tacitus, he was
 11. 97. hated by the people, and gained a very bad
 character there. Suetonius says, he governed
 them with great dignity, and the utmost inte-
 grity. The latter owns however, that there
 was a sedition at Adrumetum against the pro-
 consul, and that the mob pelted him with tur-
 nips. A magistrate, whose administration was
 irreproachable, would hardly have been insult-
 ed in that manner.

What is certain is, that he did not return
 rich from his province. On the contrary, he
 was so much in debt, that he was forced to
 mortgage what estate he had to his brother.
 His distress was such that he did not mind
 how he got money. He stooped to traffics
 much beneath his rank, for which he was in-
 sultingly called a Horse Jockey. He was like-
 wise taxed with getting two * hundred thou-
 sand sesterces from a young man, for whom
 he procured the dignity of senator against his
 father's will. These are proofs that Tacitus
 was in the right to say * Vespasian's character
 was not spotless when he was raised to the em-
 pire, and that he may be ranked among the
 very small number of those of whom prosperity
 ever made better men.

He

* Ambigua de Vespasiano fama: solusque omnium ante
 æ principum in melius mutatus est. *Tac. Hist.* I. 50.

He accompanied Nero in his expedition to Greece, and his indifference for that prince's fine voice, which had very near been his ruin, as I have already said, drew another misfortune upon him. Tired of hearing Nero sing, he would often either go away or fall asleep. The emperor highly offended at it, forbid him his presence. Vespasian retired to a small remote town, expecting nothing but death, when the commission of emperor's lieutenant for the war against the Jews was brought him. That war was beginning to be of consequence, and it was thought proper to entrust the management of it to a man of judgment and merit, who at the same time should not be great enough to give umbrage. The obscurity of Vespasian's birth, and his experience in war, qualified him exactly for that important trust, and accordingly the court pitched on him.

He answered all that was expected from him. Ever * vigilant and active, the object he had in view was what he thought of day and night. He marched at the head of the legions; went himself to reconnoitre proper places for encampments; and equally brave and intelligent, exerted both his head and arm. The plainest food was what best suited him. His dress and equipage was hardly superior to that of a common soldier. One might, says Tacitus, have compared him to the old generals

* *Vespasianus acer militiæ, anteire agmen, locum castris capere, noctu diuque consilio, ac, si res posceret, manu honestibus obniti, cibo fortuito, veste habituque vix a gregario milite discrepans, prorsus, si avaritia abesset, antiquis ducibus par.* *Tac. Hist. II. 5.*

A.R. 820. rals of the republic, had he not been tainted
A. C. 69. with avarice.

He sends
his son Ti-
tus to
Rome to
pay ho-
mage to
Galba in
his name.
Tac. Hist.
II. 1—7.
Suet. Tit.
3—5.

The circumstances of things, and the persuasion of others, rather than his own ambition, was what induced Vespasian to think of the empire. He had no concern in the revolution which deprived Nero of the throne and life : and was so far from thinking of forming a party against Galba, that he sent his son Titus to pay homage to him in his name. Politicians talked a great deal about that journey. Wherever Titus passed, the public immediately made Galba adopt him : and indeed he well deserved it. His comely and majestic countenance ; his happy turn of mind, fit for every thing, and cultivated with great care ; the ease and dignity with which he spoke and wrote Greek and Latin either in prose or verse ; his dexterity at all manly exercises, and especially those that relate to war ; the proofs he had given of his valour in Germany and Britain, and particularly in the war against the Jews, in which, having an important command under his father, he had gained battles, and taken towns ; but above all, his remarkable goodness, generosity and humanity, joined to the vigour of youth (for Titus was then entering into his twenty-eighth year) prove that Galba could not in fact have made a better choice. But he had no thoughts of it, as appeared by the event ; and was killed before Titus arrived at Rome.

Titus
learns Gal-
ba's death
on the
road, and
returns to
his father.

Vespasian's son was at Corinth when he learned that Galba and Piso had been killed, and that the empire was like to be disputed by Otho, acknowledged in Rome, and Vitellius, whom the German armies had proclaimed.

This

This news changing the whole system of his A.R. 820. conduct, he consulted with a few friends, what A. C. 69. steps were most proper for him to take. To continue his journey to Rome, would have answered no end; nor could he expect, that whoever he found in possession of the empire, would be pleased at his having undertaken that journey for another: besides that, he feared being kept as hostage either by Otho or Vitellius. On the contrary, if he returned, the conqueror, whoever he might be, would certainly take it ill. On the whole, that inconvenience seemed the least, because victory was still doubtful, and Vespasian's espousing the victor's cause, would palliate his son's indiscretion. If Vespasian aimed at higher things, and himself aspired at the empire, guarding against distrusters and umbrages, would then have been out of season, since in that case, war only could decide it. This last party was that which Titus was inclined to take: and after weighing the reasons for hope and fear, hope prevailed, and he resolved to return to his father. Some were of opinion, that his passion for Berenice greatly influenced that determination. It * is true he loved that queen, and in general was given to pleasure during his youth, though when emperor he was much more reserved than during his father's life: but even before that time, his attachment to Berenice never interfered, as Tacitus observes, with his duty and the business of the state.

* Neque abhorrebat a Berenice juvenilis animus: sed gerendis rebus nullum ex eo impedimentum. Lætari voluptatibus adolescentiam egit, suo quam patris imperio modestior. *Tac.*

A.R. 820. state. Titus returned towards the east, his
 A. C. 69. thoughts entirely taken up with great views.
 Passing by the island of Cyprus, he visited the
 temple of Paphos, where Venus was worship-
 ped under the odd symbol of a cone * of white
 marble. In that temple was an oracle which
 Titus consulted, first about his voyage, and
 afterward concerning his future fortune. The
 priest, after having answered his questions
 publicly, gave him the highest expectations
 in a private conference.

Titus con-
 sults the
 oracle of
 Paphos.
 Pretended
 presages of
 Vespasian's
 elevation.

One might at that time have ventured to
 foretel that Vespasian would be emperor,
 without recurring to supernatural knowledge.
 His merit compared to the worthlessness of
 Otho and Vitellius, the forces, of which he had
 the command, the success he had already had
 in the war against the Jews, and the example
 of three emperors chosen and seated on the
 throne by the soldiers, were sure presages of
 the grandeur to which Vespasian rose. No-
 thing was talked of but prodigies by which it
 was foretold him. I shall not trouble myself,
 nor my readers, with copying the list Suetoni-
 us and Dion Cassius give of them ; but be con-
 tent with Tacitus's judicious remark. " The
 " event, says * that philosophic historian,
 " made us all very wise. After seeing Vespas-
 " sian's elevation, we soon concluded it fore-
 " told

* In several countries the first objects of idolatry were
 stones consecrated to some divinity, and which were
 thought to represent or contain it. M. Duguet gives
 several instances of that kind of worship in his explanation
 of Genesis, c. 28. v. 19.

† Occulta lege fati, & ostentis ac responsis destinatum
 Vespasiano liberisque ejus imperium, post fortunam cre-
 didimus. *Tac. Hist.* i. 10.

"told by heaven, by various presages." In A. R. 820.
 the same manner we may judge, that the pre- A. C. 69.
 dictions of the priest of Paphos were founded
 on public report, and the probability of the
 event.

An absurd interpretation of our sacred ora- Prophecies relating to the Mes-
 cles, famous throughout all the east, gave an sias, ap-
 additional weight and credit to that same opi- plied to
 nion. The prophecies, by which it was fore- Vespasian.
 told, that the chief and deliverer of nations Tac. Hist.
 should arise in Judea, were applied to Vespasian. v. 13.
 Tacitus has fallen into that mistake, not
 to be wondered at in him. But what we can- Jos. de B.
 not help being surprised at is, that a worship- Jud. iv.
 per and priest of the true God, the historian 14. vii. 12.
 Josephus, should have made so shameful an Hist. Univ.
 abuse of the scriptures. "Blind, says M.
 "Bossuet, blind indeed, so to give away the
 "hopes of Jacob and of Judah, to strangers,
 "by seeking in Vespasian the son of Abraham
 "and of David, and ascribing to an idolatrous
 "prince, the title of him whose light was to
 "convert the Gentiles from idolatry."

Titus on his arrival found his father in ap- Secret ne-
 pearance determined for Otho, to whom he gociations
 had made his legions take the oath of fidelity. between
 Vespasian, prudent and circumspect, proceeded Vespasian
 slowly, and was in no haste to declare what and Mu-
 had long been privately negotiating between cian.
 him and Mucian, at that time governor of Sy- Tac. Hist.
 ria. At first they were at variance together;
 the vicinity of their provinces having occasion- ii. 4.
 ed, as frequently happens in those cases, jea-
 lousy and discord between them. When Nero
 died, they were reconciled, and concerted mea-
 sures together, first by means of their friends,

A.R. 820. and afterwards with the assistance of Titus, A.C. 69. who became the bond of their union, for which his character, and the care he took to gain Mucian's favour, made him extremely fit. Vespasian and Mucian were very different men: the one was a warrior, and the other qualified for negotiation: Vespasian delighted in simplicity and economy: Mucian was fond of shew and magnificence, living more like a prince than a private man. The former shone in action, the latter in words. An* excellent prince, says Tacitus, might have been made out of them both, could their good qualities have been blended, and their bad ones taken away.

The first councils they held together were attended with no great consequences. They both submitted sincerely to Galba: only taking more care than before, to make the officers of their armies love them; to that end pleasing the good by laudable means, and inspiring them with a virtuous emulation; and the bad by indulging their licentiousness, and love of pleasure.

The legions in the East, grow warm in favour of Vespasian.

The seeds thus sown sprung up, and it was not long before their fruits were reaped: for, when two rivals, such as Otho and Vitellius were seen distracting the republic by their wars, the end of which could be no other than to make vice triumphant, the legions in the East began to take fire. "Why, said they, must others decide the fate of the empire, and engross every reward, whilst eternal servitude is our lot?" The troops examined their

* *Egregium principatus temperamentum, si, demptis utriusque vitiis, solæ virtutes miscerentur. Tac. Hist. ii. 5.*

their strength, and began to take confidence A.R. 820.
 in it. Three legions were in Judea, four in A. C. 69.
 Syria: the former inured to all the difficulties
 of an obstinate war, and the latter animated
 and encouraged by the brave examples set
 them by their neighbouring army: Egypt with
 its two legions was near them. On one side
 they had Pontus, Cappadocia, and the troops
 that bordered on Armenia; on the other, all
 Asia Minor, a rich and populous province;
 all the island down from the Egean sea; and
 the distance at which they were from the cen-
 tre enabled them to mak all their preparations
 with ease and safety.

The two generals were well acquainted with the disposition of their troops, ^{He is for waiting the decision of the quarrel between Otho and Vitellius.} Vespasian had a little time to breathe in the Jewish war, to end which nothing remained but to take Jerusalem. Titus, a most useful and precious help, arrived at that time. The heads of the enterprize resolved however to wait the event of the war between Otho and Vitellius. They were not afraid of seeing both parties unite under the victor, well knowing * that no reconciliation is ever sincere between the conquerors and conquered, and that it was of little importance to them which of the two rivals prevailed. " Prosperity, said they, turns even the best and ablest heads: but as to these vile slaves to effeminacy and voluptuousness, their vices render their ruin infallible: war
 " will

* Victores victosque nunquam solida fide coalescere. Nec referre Vitellium an Othonem superstitem fortuna faceret. Rebus secundis etiam egregios duces inolescere, Discordiam his, ignaviam, luxuriam: & suismet vitiis alterum bello, alterum victoria perituum. Tac.

A.R. 820. "will deliver us from one, and the other will
A. C. 69. "be undone by victory."

Such was the plan concerted between Vespasian and Mucian, sure of being backed by their armies the moment they should give the signal. The ardour was universal. Good * men desired a change for the sake of the republic: hopes of plunder and riches were an inducement to many, whilst others thought to retrieve their shattered fortunes. So that all, good and bad, wished for war with equal ardour, though with different views.

Vespasian
still hesi-
tates after
Otho's
death.
Tac. Hist.
ii. 74.

Vespasian still hesitated after the strife was ended by the battle of Bedriac, and death of Otho. He even went through the ceremony of swearing allegiance to Vitellius: himself pronounced the formulary of the oath, adding to it vows for the happiness and prosperity of the new emperor: but the soldiers, whose intentions were quite different, hard him in silence. It may be presumed he was not greatly displeased at the reluctance his army shewed to imitate him on that occasion. Every thing encouraged his wishes. Besides Mucian and the Syrian legions, Tiberius Alexander, prefect of Egypt, was likewise in his interest. He depended too on the third legion, but lately drawn out of Syria, and sent to Mæsia, where he then was; and with reason flattered himself, that the other legions in Illyria would follow the example of the third: for all those armies were incensed against the arrogance of the Ger-
man

* *Optimus quisque amore reipublicæ. Multos dulcedo prædæ stimulat, alios ambigue domi res. Ita boni, malique, causis diversis, studio pari, bellum omnes cupiebant. Tac.*

man legions, who despised the others as greatly A. R. 820.
 inferior to them. To all those reasons, by A. C. 69.
 which success seemed to be in a manner certain, Vespasian opposed in his own mind, the difficulty and danger of so great an enterprize.
 “ What * a day, said he, will that be, in which
 “ a father, threescore years old, shall expose
 “ himself, with his two sons, in the flower of
 “ their age, to all the dangers and hazards of
 “ war! Those whose views do not extend beyond a private station, may recede from
 “ what they do; they can either push or stop
 “ their fortune as they please. But he that
 “ aims at empire, has no medium between the
 “ highest elevation, and the lowest fall.” He
 considered the strength of the German armies, which a warrior, like him, could not but be well acquainted with. His legions could fight well against foreign enemies, but they had never contended with Romans: and he feared he should find in Otho’s troops, of which he was the support, more noise and clamour than real courage. Treason, so common in all civil wars, alarmed him, and he could not think without concern, on the danger of being assassinated. He called to mind the example of Camillus Scribonianus, murdered in Claudius’s time by Volaginius, a common soldier, who for that deed was raised to the highest honours and greatest command in the army: a strong temptation to others to be traitors too. “ Batal-
 “ lions

* Quis ille dies foret, quo sexaginta ætatis annos, & duos filios juvenes bello permetteret! Esse privatis cogitationibus regressum; & prout velint, plus minusve sumi ex fortuna. Imperium cupientibus nihil medium inter summa aut præcipitia. Tac.

A. R. 820. "lions and squadrons are a vain defence, said
 A. C. 69. "Vespasian, against perils of that kind. It is
 "often easier to defeat whole armies, than the
 "secret snares of one man."

Mucian's
 speech to
 Vespasian.

His chief officers and friends endeavoured to dissipate the fears that prevented his coming to a resolution: and at length Mucian, in a pretty numerous assembly, composed however of none but select friends, made a speech, purposely prepared with a view to determine him. "Whoever conceives a great design, said he, ought to consider whether what he undertakes is useful to the republic, honourable to himself, and easy, or at least not over difficult, to be put in execution. The person who advises such an enterprize, ought likewise to be considered: it is proper to examine whether he engages himself in it, whether he shares the danger, and above all, whether his views are disinterested, and his motive self-love, or regard for him he would have to act. When I invite you, Vespasian, to take the reins of government, I advise you to do a thing as salutary to your country, as it is glorious to yourself. It is an easy enterprize: next to the gods, success is in your own hands. Think not this si flattery. To succeed Vitellius, is rather a blemish than an honour."

"We have not to fight against the consummate prudence of Augustus, nor the political cunning of Tiberius, nor a right of inheritance consecrated by long possession, by which Caligula, Claudius, and Nero were seated on the throne. You yielded even to the ancient nobility of Galba's birth. To
 "remain

" remain * any longer in inaction, and leave A.R. 820.
 " the republic exposed to shame and inevitable ruin, would be insensibility, it would be
 " cowardice, even though servitude were as free
 " from danger as it is full of shame for you.

" The time is past in which your designs
 " might be buried in secrecy. The throne
 " must be your asylum, rather than the object
 " of your ambition. Have you forgot Cor-
 " bulo's violent death? It is true, his origin
 " was more illustrious than ours: but then
 " Nero too was in that respect infinitely above
 " Vitellius. Whoever is able to make another
 " fear him, will always seem great enough to
 " him that fears. Vitellius knows by his own
 " experience, that an army can make an em-
 " peror. To the troops he owes all that he
 " possesses, for he never deserved any thing by
 " his own military exploits, nor by any repu-
 " tation acquired by him in feats of arms.
 " Hatred to Galba, was what recommended
 " him. If he triumphed over Otho, let not
 " that be imputed either to the skill of the ge-
 " neral, nor the strength of his army. What
 " conquered Otho was, his own precipitate de-
 " spair: and Vitellius has taught us to regret
 " him. He abuses insolently the victory he
 " gained: he disperses the legions in distant
 " countries, breaks and disarms the prætorian
 " cohorts, as if his design was to lay a founda-
 " tion for the war that will soon break out
 " against

* *Torpere ultra, & polluendam perdendamque rempub-
 licam relinquere, sopor & ignavia videretur, etiam si ti-
 bi, quam inhonesta, tam tuta servitus esset. Abiit jam
 & transvectum est illud tempus, quo posses videri concu-
 pisse. Confugiendum est ad imperium. Tac.*

A.R.820. " against him. Whatever spirit and ardour
A. C. 69. " his troops might once have, now degenerates
" from day to day, and is enervated by wine,
" by debauches of every kind, and by too faith-
" ful an imitation of their prince. Shall his
" situation be compared to your's? Judea, Sy-
" ria, and Egypt, together offer you nine vi-
" gorous legions, weakened by no battles, cor-
" rupted by no licentiousness or discord; but
" all brave soldiers, enured to the fatigues of
" war, and victors over a stubborn and rebel-
" lious nation. Add to them an equal number
" of auxiliary troops, naval forces, kings allies
" and friends, and above all, your own great
" experience.

" As to me, I hope none will accuse me of
" arrogance, if all I desire is not to be in a
" lower station than Cæcina and Valens. Do
" not however slight Mucian for a friend, be-
" cause he is not your rival. I think myself
" better than Vitellius, but not so good as
" you. The triumphal purple has adorned
" your name: you have two sons, one of
" whom is already fit to reign, and in his first
" campaigns has gained honour even with the
" German armies. It would be quite absurd
" in me not to give up the empire to him
" whose son I should adopt were I myself em-
" peror. The good or bad success of this en-
" terprize cannot be equally shared between
" us. If we conquer, I shall hold the rank
" you may be pleased to allot me: but our
" misfortunes, should we miscarry, would be
" the same. Or rather let me bear the greatest
" share of danger. Remain you here with
" your

" your legions, and let me go before and try A. R. 820.
 " the fate of war and battle. A. C. 69.

" A better discipline * now reigns among
 " the conquered than the conquerors. Indig-
 " nation, hatred, and thirst after revenge, now
 " animate the former to glorious deeds. The
 " latter are bastardised by the contemptuous
 " scorn and insolence with which prosperity
 " inspires them. The wounds of the victo-
 " rious party are at present scabbed over by
 " their good fortune; but not yet healed.
 " They are sores palliated by peace, which
 " war will soon burst open again. I may say
 " with truth, that I do not more confide in
 " your activity, good conduct, and prudent
 " circumspection, than I do in Vitellius's bru-
 " tishness, ignorance, and cruelty.

" After all, none can doubt but that our
 " cause must be better in war than in peace:
 " for to deliberate whether we shall revolt, is
 " in fact revolting."

All that heard Mucian's speech joined with Vespasian
 him, in pressing is prevail- Vespasian more strongly than
 ever to come to a resolution; and particularly ed on to
 insisted on the presages which, said they, called accept the
 him to the empire. empire. The motive they then His weak-
 urged suited Vespasian's way of thinking, for ness in giv-
 he believed in every branch of divination, so ing credit
 much, to divina- Tac. Hist.
ii. 78.

* *Acriore hodie disciplina victi quam victores agunt.*
Hos ira, odium, ultionis cupiditas ad virtutem accendit:
Illi per fastidium & contumaciam hebescent. Aperiet
& recludet contacta & tumescentia victricium partium
vulnera bellum ipsum. Nec mihi major in tua vigilan-
tia, parsimonia, sapientia, fiducia est, quam in Vitellii
torpore, inscitia, sævitia. Sed et meliorem in bello quam
in pace causam habemus. Nam qui deliberant, descive-
runt. Tac.

A.R. 820. much, that when emperor he kept publicly an
 A. C. 69. astrologer called Seleucus, whom he consulted
 about faturity. At the instant I am speaking
 of, those pretended presages, some of which had
 happened long before, occurred to him. He
 thought * them fulfilled in the unexpected
 grandeur he had already attained, in enjoying
 the ornaments of triumph, the consulship, and
 the signal honour of having reduced Judea.
 When in possession of all his glory, he inter-
 preted them into a promise of the empire.

Jos. de. B.

Jud. III.

14.

Suet. & Dio.

Vespas.

Tac.

Josephus boasts of having foretold it him
 whilst Nero was yet alive : and that fact is at-
 tested by Suetonius and Dion Cassius. Was
 the Jewish priest a deceiver, or himself deceiv-
 ed, in that his absurd and sacrilegious inter-
 pretation of the sacred prophecies? That might
 be difficult, and is of no importance to deter-
 mine. Tacitus says, that Vespasian likewise
 consulted an old oracle on mount Carmel, to
 which no temple, but only an altar, had been
 built: a circumstance that seems to agree pretty
 well with the high places so much talked of in
 the scriptures, and where in the times of the
 kings of Judah, sacrifices were offered up to the
 true God, though contrary to the law by which
 public worship was permitted in the temple
 only. If there be any foundation for this con-
 jecture, we must infer from thence, that idola-
 trous customs were, in process of time, intro-
 duced into the worship, originally established in
 that place in honour of the God of Israel : for
 Tacitus speaks of a priest called Basilides, who
 con-

* Sed primo triumphalia & consulatus, & Judaicæ vic-
 toriæ decus, implese fidem ominis videbantur. Ut hæc
 adeptus est, portendi sibi imperium credebat. *Tac.*

consulted the entrails of victims, to be informed A.R. 820.
of what was to happen; a downright Pagan A. C. 69.
superstition. However that may be, the an-
swer given by that priest, added greatly to
Vespasian's expectations; and, full of those
ideas, he at last yielded to the solicitations of
those about him, and came to a resolution,
though without declaring himself openly as yet.
When Mucian and he parted, to return each to
his province, the one to Antioch, and the
other to Cæsaria, their resolutions were taken;
and soon after they were put in execution.

Alexandria was the first place where Vespasian was acknowledged and proclaimed. On the first of July, Tiberius Alexander, at the head of his legions, swore allegiance to him, and that day was afterwards reckoned the first of Vespasian's reign, though his own army did not take the oaths till the third of that month. The troops were so impatient, that they did not wait for Titus's return from Syria, where he was gone to concert with Mucian how it were best to put their designs in execution. The soldiers had long been ready: but a proper time and place had not yet been agreed on, nor who was the most proper person to speak first and set them on, which is generally one of the most difficult parts in such enterprizes. The troops could not brook those delays. In the morning, a small number waited on Vespasian at his house, to salute him according to custom as their general, but saluted him emperor the moment they saw him: All the others immediately joined them, calling him Cæsar and Augustus, and giving him every title belonging to the supreme power. Thus

was

A. R. 820. was that grand affair transacted. From that A. C. 69. moment not the least trace could be perceived in Vespasian, of the timidity which had made him hesitate so long, but he yielded to his fortune with a good grace. Nor did he, on the other hand, * shew the least pride or arrogance: his new state made no alteration in his behaviour. The vast multitude that surrounded him, being quieted and put in some order, he harangued them in a plain military stile without flattery or ostentation.

Mucian waited only for Vespasian's declaring himself, to make the troops under his command take the oaths to him, which they did with the utmost readiness and zeal. He afterwards proceeded to Antioch, and going to the theatre, where it was the custom of the Greek towns for the people to hold their assemblies, he harangued the inhabitants who flocked together in crowds, and heard him with transports of joy. Mucian † spoke Greek with great ease and eloquence; and delivered himself with an air of dignity, which gave an additional weight to all he said. One circumstance that he mentioned, made a great impression on the people: he told them Vitellius's design was to send the German legion into Syria, to reward them for what they had done, by allotting them a mild and quiet service in that rich province; and that, on the other hand, the Syrian legions were to be removed to Germany, a rigorous climate, and inhabited by barbarians,

* In ipso nihil tumidum, arrogans, aut in rebus novis novum fuit. *Tac.*

† Satis decorus etiam Græca facundia, omniumque quæ diceret atque ageret arte quadam ostentator. *Tac.*

ans, with whom they would be forced to be at A.R. 820.
continual war. Such a change could not but A. C. 69.
greatly alarm the Syrian troops, nor were the
inhabitants of that province less concerned.
The legions had been used to have their de-
partments fixed and allotted them, and gene-
rally settled for life in the provinces where
they were quartered. By that means they
formed connections with the inhabitants, out of
friendship, for society, or by intermarriages :
so that they thought themselves in a manner
banished by being removed, and the people
too were afraid of losing friends and relations
when they went.

Vespasian was acknowledged emperor by all
Syria, before the fifteenth of July, and that
example was soon followed by the whole East.
Soæmus, whom Nero had made king of So-
phæna, declared for the new emperor, together
with Antiochus king of Commagena, descend-
ed from the Seleucidæ, and the richest of all
the kings tributaries to the Romans. The
younger Agrippa, king of the Jews, receiving
private intelligence from his friends, left Rome
before Vitellius was informed of what was do-
ing in the East, and offered his service to Ves-
pasian. His sister Berenice was not less zeal-
ous : the prudence and judgment of that prin-
cess, were equal to her beauty ; and she had not
only made Titus love her, but had even pleas-
ed Vespasian by the magnificent presents she
made him. All the provinces of Asia Minor,
Pontus, Cappadocia, and the neighbouring
countries as far as Armenia, followed the tor-
rent. But as those countries were disarmed,
they were rather an addition of credit and
eclat,

A.R. 820. eclat, than of real strength to the party they
A. C. 69. espoused.

A great
council
held at
Beryta.
Prepara-
tives for
war.

A great council was held at Beryta in Phœnicia, to consider of proper measures for the war. Vespasian and Mucian brought with them the chief officers of their armies with the flower of their troops: and that great number of horse and foot, together with the concourse of kings, who came in pomp to pay homage to the new emperor, formed a court, which already began to answer to the majesty of the supreme rank.

The first care was to order the troops to be levied, and old soldiers to be called back to their standards. Arsenal's were established in the chief cities, and gold and silver money ordered to be coined at Antioch. Intelligent and vigilant dictators were chosen for these operations, and Vespasian * had an eye over them himself. He visited the places where they were at work by his orders, caused an exact account to be given him of every thing, commended and encouraged those who did their duty, and roused the negligent by his own example, chusing rather to wink at faults, than not take notice of the good qualities of those who served him. He rewarded such as he was well satisfied with, by giving them good employments, or making them senators. Most of them did honour to his choice, and turned out great men. But the best of princes cannot always guard against deception, and some of those

* Ipse Vespasianus adire, hortari, bonos laude, segnes exemplo incitare sæpius quam coercere, vitia magis amicorum, quam virtutes dissimulans. Tac.

those, whom Vespasian promoted, proved to A.R. 820.
have no other merit than their riches. A. C. 69.

It was a settled custom for new emperors to give a sum of money to the troops. Vespasian did so : but he engaged to give for a civil war, no more than his predecessors had given in times of peace. He behaved * with great firmness towards the soldiers, who became better troops by not being flattered. There was reason to fear, that by sending the legions to make war in Italy, the Parthians and Armenians might take advantage of that opportunity, to molest the provinces bordering on the Euphrates. Ambassadors were sent to the kings of those two nations to keep them quiet. The war in Judea was likewise not to be neglected. Titus was charged with that. As to Vespasian, it was agreed he should go to Alexandria, in order, if necessary, to distress Italy by want of corn, their chief supply of which the Romans received from Egypt. A part † of the troops under Mucian's command, with the name of Vespasian, and their confidence in the decrees of fate, by which whatever was ordained must be brought to pass, were thought sufficient against Vitellius. Letters were sent to all the armies of the empire and their commanders, notifying the election of the new emperor, and inviting them to confirm it ; and measures were likewise taken to gain the prætorian broke by Vitellius

* *Egregie firmus adversus militarem largitionem, eoque exercitu meliore. Tac.*

† *Sufficere videbantur abversus Vitellium pars copiarum, & dux Mucianus, & Vespasiani nomen, ac nihil arduum satis. Tac.*

A. R. 820. Vitellius, by giving them hopes of being again
A. C. 69. received into the service.

Departure
of Mucian.
and his
plan of
war.

Mucian made all the haste he could to set out with some light troops, freed from all incumbrance of baggage. He concerted his march so as to avoid * a slowness that might have been imputed to fear; and too great a diligence, that fame might have time to magnify and encrease his strength. As the forces he carried with him were but few, too near a view would have been disadvantageous to them. The sixth legion and several detachments, composing together a body of thirteen thousand men, followed at some distance: and in order to transport those troops to Europe, Mucian had directed the fleet of Pontus to be ready in the port of Byzantium. His first design seems to have been to gain Mæsia, the legions of which province he very justly thought were well affected to Vespasian. But that was a tedious way to Italy; and he was in some doubt whether he should not do better to march all his land forces directly to Dyrrachium in Epirus, from whence the passage to Italy is very short; and by which means he would be able to keep Brindium and Tarentum in awe on one side, whilst on the other, his fleet extending itself in the Ionian sea, would cover Greece and Asia, and at the same time be a check on Vitellius, by making him apprehend attacks on Italy from several quarters at once.

The

* Non lento itinere, ne cunctari videretur; neque tamen properans, gliscere famam ipso spatio sinebat, gnarus modicas vires sibi, & majora credi de absentibus. Tac.

The preparations for this enterprize, put A.R. 820.
all the provinces beyond sea in motion. They A. C. 69.
were obliged to furnish arms, ships, and sol- He vexes the people,
diers; but nothing harrassed them so much as
the raising of money. Mucian was perpe-
tually saying, that money was the sinew of
civil war, and he acted accordingly, setting
no bounds to his power, and behaving more
like the emperor's associate, than his minister
and general. He made no scruple to com-
mit injustice: informers were well received
and encouraged by him: he paid no regard
to the truth of facts, nor innocence of per-
sons, the rich were always guilty. The ne-
cessity* of war was a kind of excuse for
these intolerable vexations: but the effect of
them subsisted long after the peace. Vespas-
ian, the beginning of his reign, lent ear to
all just remonstrances; but afterwards, spoilt,
says Tacitus, by his good fortune, and the
bad lessons of politicians, with whom the
prince's interest is the supreme law, injustice
grew familiar to him, and was even autho-
rized. So deplorable is the condition of so-
vereigns, who, though sincerely fond of virtue,
find it very difficult to practice on account
of those that are about them. Mucian con-
tributed out of his own money too, towards
the expence of the war, but he well knew
how to repay himself with usurious interest.
Several others imitated his generosity, but few
2 had

* Quæ gravia atque intoleranda, sed necessitate arma-
rum excusata, etiam in pæce mansere: ipso Vespasiano,
inter imperii, ad obtinendas iniquitate, haud perinde ob-
stinato: donec, indulgentia fortunæ, & pravis magistris,
didicit aususque est. *Tac.*

A.R. 820. had the same means of getting back what
A. C. 69. they advanced.

The event of all these preparations was singular enough. They were of no use towards the decision of the war which was ended before Mucian had time to draw near Italy.

The person to whom Vespasian was chiefly indebted for so speedy and happy a success, was Antonius Primus, a native of Toulouse, and probably of Gaulish extraction, his surname in his infancy having been *Becco* or *Bec*, a Celtic word, still retained in the French language. His character was an odd composition of good and bad. Branded under Nero by sentence of a court of justice; and condemned for forgery, he recovered, as many others not more deserving than himself did, the rank of senator, by means of the revolution which placed Galba on the imperial throne: and that emperor gave him the command of the seventh legion quartered in Pannonia. He offered his service to Otho, who neither employed, nor took any notice of him. When * Vitellius's affairs began to wear a bad aspect, Primus was one of the first that declared for Vespasian, who acquired in him a brave officer, an eloquent man, and one who knew how to manage and turn the minds of others as he pleased. It must be owned he often made a bad use of those talents, stirring up discords and seditions, calumniating, doing violence to others,

All the legions of Illyria declare for Vespasian. Character of Antonius Primus. *Suet. Vit. 18. Tac. Hist. ii. 85.*

* *Labantibus Vitellii rebus, Vespasianum secutus, grande momentum addidit, strenuus manu, sermone promptus, ferendæ in alios invidiæ artifex, discordiis & seditionibus potens, raptor, largitor, pace pessimus, bello non spernendus. Tac.*

others, and being dangerously generous: he A.R. 820,
was a bad citizen in peace, but a most va- A. C. 69.
luable warrior.

He could not wish a fairer opportunity to satisfy his ambition and make his fortune, than what was offered by the rebellion in favour of Vespasian, already acknowledged and proclaimed by the three legions in Mæsia: for they were the first that declared for Vespasian in the west. One of them arriving in Syria, as I have said, towards the end of Nero's reign, gave the two others a great idea of Vespasian's merit: besides which, their attachment to Otho, in whose cause they had first been engaged, disposed them the more readily to favour Vitellius's enemy. Some artful men took care to improve those sentiments, by handing about a letter, true or false, from Otho to Vespasian, desiring him to come and succour the republic, and revenge his wrongs. In short, they had offended Vitellius; for, learning Otho's defeat whilst they were marching to his assistance, they used those that brought them the news, very ill, tore the colours on which Vitellius's name was inscribed, and plundered and divided among them the money of the military chest. Those were crimes with regard to Vitellius, but might be a means of recommending them to Vespasian. For these reasons, they espoused his cause with such warmth, that they endeavoured to bring over the legions of Pannonia too, making use to that end, not only of invitations, but likewise menaces. Antonius Primus backed the desires of the Mælian army with all his might, and succeeded with so much the less difficulty

*Suet. Vit.
6. & Tac.*

A.R. 820. difficulty as he had to deal with troops who
 A. C. 69. having been at the battle of Bedriac, had not yet forgiven Vitellius their defeat. The Mæ-sian and Pannonian armies joining together, obliged the Dalmatian to do the same, by which means all Illyria was on Vespasian's side.

It is very remarkable that neither of these three armies, was influenced by its general in this new choice. Aponius Saturninus, who commanded the Mæ-sian troops, far from favouring their insurrection, sent word to Rome of the desertion of the third legion. But his zeal for Vitellius, not being very great, when he saw it was out of his power to govern his soldiers, he joined them himself, and took advantage of that opportunity to satisfy his own private animosities, under pretence of serving the common cause. He hated Tertius Julianus, an ancient prætor, who had the command of a legion, and sent a centurion to kill him, as being too strongly attached to Vitellius. Julianus being informed of the danger he was in, crossed over mount Hæmus which divides Mæ-sia from Thrace. From thence he set out, as if with a design to go to Vespasian : but taking care not to expose himself to new dangers, he waited the event of things, and according to the intelligence he received, either hastened or slackened his march, by which means he had no concern at all in the civil war.

The commanders of the Pannonian and Dalmatian armies were T. Ampius Flavianus, and Poppæus Silvanus, rich old men, unfit to make a figure in those disturbances. But
 Pannonia

Pannonia * had an intendant who acted a great A.R. 820. part. Cornelius Fuscus, for that was his name, A. C. 69. was a young man of a noble family, and full of heat and fire, though he had some years before resigned the dignity of senator, out of a sudden desire to live private and retired : but that proved only a momentary fancy ; Fuscus was cut out for action, and the disturbances that preceded Nero's fall, rousing him from his lethargy, he distinguished himself in Galba's cause, and was made intendant of Pannonia. There he espoused Vespasian's interest, and became one of the chief promoters of the war, liking † danger for the sake of danger, much more than for the reward he might expect from it, and preferring new hopes attended with hazard and uncertainty, to a fortune already fixed and established. Joining with Antonius Primus, they endeavoured in concert to improve and stir up every seed of discord, and uneasiness in whatever province it was to be found. They wrote to the fourteenth legion in Britain, and to the first in Spain, because both of them had held out for Otho against Vitellius. They sent letters to every part of Gaul, and in a moment, things were ready for a general revolution, the

* Tacitus leaves us to guess whether it was Pannonia or Dalmatia that Fuscus was intendant of, or whether his commission extended to both those provinces. This last supposition does not seem probable. Being under a necessity of chusing one or the other, I have preferred Pannonia, because the army of the province marched with Fuscus, whereas the Dalmatians did not stir till long after.

† Non tam præmiis periculorum, quem ipsis periculis lætus, pro certis & olim partis nova, ambigua, ancipitia malebat. Tac.

A. R. 820. the Illyrian armies being fully and openly bent
A. C. 69. on war, and the others ready to follow their
example.

Vitellius's first motions weak and languid.
Tac. Hist.
ii. 73. Nothing less could have awaked Vitellius from his lethargy: it was the situation the most natural of any to his indolent soul: but it is not to be conceived with what haughty security, and prodigious additional indolence he was filled, at hearing that all the East had sworn fidelity to him; for till then the name of Vespasian, who it was strongly reported would be made emperor, had given Vitellius some uneasiness. When he thought he had nothing more to fear from that quarter, he and his army knew no longer any bounds, but gave themselves up to all manner of cruelty, rapine, and tyranny.

Tac. Hist.
ii. 69. The news of the revolt of the third legion in Mæsia, was what first began to rouse Vitellius; and make him sensible he had formed a wrong judgment of Vespasian. However he was not much alarmed at it. Aponius Saturninus, from whom that intelligence came, had not represented the danger so great as it really was, and the flatteries of the courtiers made it still less. They said it was only a seditious insurrection of a single legion, and that all the other armies would remain faithful. Vitellius talked in the same style when he acquainted the soldiers with it, complaining of the inconsiderate rashness of the prætorians lately broke, who took a pleasure in spreading false reports. He assured them there was no danger of a civil war, taking particular care not to mention Vespasian, and distributed soldiers in every part of the city,
to

to prevent people from getting together to talk of news and politics : useless and even hurtful precautions, which served only to give greater credit to the reports he wanted to stifle.

He sent orders however, to Germany, Britain, and Spain, for troops to come to him : but they were couched in a soft and almost indifferent style, far from insisting on a strong and speedy assistance ; and they to whom those orders were directed, executed them with the same remissness and indifference. In Germany, Hordeonius Flaccus, already uneasy at the revolt of the Batavians, of which we shall have occasion to speak more fully hereafter, was afraid of having soon a considerable war to carry on. Vectius Bolanus could not expect the Britons, ever uneasy, and enemies to the yoke, would remain quiet ; nor were either of those commanders over strongly attached to Vitellius's party. Spain was without a head, Cluvius Rufus, being, as I have said, detained at court ; and the particular commanders of the three legions, each equal to the other in authority, and who, if Vitellius's affairs had been in a flourishing situation, would have strove who should shew the greatest submission and obedience, were in no hurry to share his dangers and ill fortune. Africa alone stirred for him, because Vitellius had left a good character behind him there, whereas Vespasian was not esteemed by them. But Valerius Festus, who commanded in that province, did not back the zeal of the people and soldiers, seeming rather to waver and wait the event.

By

A. R. 820. By this means Vitellius was badly served
A. C. 69. every where : and besides that, laboured under the disadvantage of having very imperfect intelligence of his adversaries designs and preparatives ; whilst his own were publicly known to all. He was too negligent to make exact enquiries ; whilst Vespasian's emissaries in the West worked privately, and what by their own address, and the fidelity of their friends, remained in general concealed : a few of them only were discovered and taken in Rhætia and Gaul, and sent to Vitellius who put them to death. As to the East, it was difficult to receive news from thence, either over land, because the passes of the Pannonian * Alps were guarded by the Illyrian soldiers ; or by sea, on account of the † Etæsiæ winds which then blew, and prevented ships sailing from Syria and Egypt towards Rome and Italy. At last, however, the danger of a sudden irruption, which the Illyrian legions seemed to threaten, and the bad accounts received from all hands, forced Vitellius to order Cæcina and Valens to prepare to take the field, Cæcina set out first, Valens was but just recovering from a fit of sickness, which kept him some time longer in Rome. As to Vitellius, he continued his pleasures and diversions as usual, and gave at that very time, games, in which he intended to bring on the stage, and the infamous Sporus, who, at last grew tired of the course of infamy, he had gone through so many years, and killed himself, if we may credit Dion Cassius.

He at last makes the German legions take the field.

The

* That part of the Alps nearest to the Adriatic sea.

† Winds which constantly blow Northwest, about the time of the summer solstice,

The German armies were so altered by their abode * in Rome, that they were not to be known again when they left it. Their strength of body and courage were quite wasted : their march was slow and lazy, their ranks thin, their arms in bad order, and their horses quite enervated and unfit for service. The soldier complained of the sun, the dust, and change of weather, and was grown as disobedient and seditious, as he was unable to bear the least fatigue. The general too, contributed to spoil that army, already so fallen from its first glory. Cæcina, who had always made it his study to please the troops, by commanding them in a weak and feeble manner, was of late grown still more languid and indolent : either from the natural effect of the luxury and pleasures to which he had given himself up, or because he had reasons for being so, and even then meditated a perfidy, in consequence of which, he thought proper to weaken the troops under his command.

Cæcina takes measures to betray Vitellius.

His fidelity was thought to have been got the better of, by Flavius Sabinus, prefect of Rome, and brother to Vespasian, who became security for performance of covenants ; and Rubrius Gallus was the person suspected of negotiating the affair. The more effectually to bring him over, they took advantage of the jealousy between him and Valens, telling him, that as he could not equal his rival's credit

* Longe alia proficiscentis ex urbe Germinici exercitus species. Non vigor corporibus, non ardor animis, lentum & rarum agmen, fluxa arma, segnes equi : impatiens solis, pulveris, tempestatum, quantumque hebes ad sustinendum laborem miles, tanto ad discordias promptior. *Tac.*

A.R. 820. dit with Vitellius, his best way was to found
 A.C. 69. his fortune on the favour of the new prince,
 What seems certain is, that Cæcina had already formed his plan of treason when he left Rome; though he still concealed it, and when he took leave of Vitellius, received the kiss and all possible marks of regard and esteem.

He sent a detachment of his horse to secure the important post of Cremona. His own troops and Valen's marched with him. The latter wrote to the army he had before commanded to wait for him where he and his colleague had agreed. But Cæcina pretended those measures were altered, as being contrary to the good of the service, which required them to march against the enemy with all their forces. He was on the spot, and his authority prevailed. The army divided according to his order, into two bodies, one of which went to Cremona and the other to Hostilia*.

For his part, he went to Ravenna, under pretence of visiting the fleet there, and encouraging the men to do their duty: but his true reason was, to concert measures with Lucilius Bassus, prefect of the Ravenna and Misænum fleets. Though Bassus had received that double command from Vitellius, yet dissatisfied at not being made prætorian prefect, his unjust resentment sought revenge in a shameful perfidy. They went to Padua to be alone and more at liberty to concert their measures. Tacitus † does not say which of the two was the
 the

* Ostiglia in the Mantuan territories on the Po.

† Nec sciri potest, traxeritne Cæcinam, an (quod evenit inter malos, ut & similes sint) eadem illos pravitas impulerit. Tac.

the seducer : but as bad men are nearly akin, A.R. 820. he thinks they might both be equally disposed A. C. 69. to treason. Those who wrote the history of this war, during the reigns of Vespasian and his children, ascribed honourable motives to those two traitors, love of the public welfare, and a desire to see a happy peace succeed the horrors of civil wars. A language dictated by flattery. Their own interest was the principal on which they acted. They had already betrayed Galba ; and a second treason could be no difficult thing to such grovelling souls as theirs. Fearing to be eclipsed by the ascendant others might gain over Vitellius, they resolved to ruin him. Accordingly Cæcina returning to his army, made use of every artifice he could invent, to wean the hearts of the centurions and soldiers from Vitellius, to whom their fidelity and attachment was strongly rooted. Bassus found less difficulty to prevail on his marines who had but lately fought for Otho.

SECT.

SECT. II.

The heads of Vitellius's party in Illyria hold a council about the plan of war most proper for them to follow. Speech of Antonius Primus, who proposes entering Italy directly. His advice is followed. He executes himself what he had advised. His first exploits. Cæcina purposely misses an opportunity of crushing Antonius Primus. The two consuls who gave umbrage to Antonius Primus, removed by two seditions. Bassus, who commanded the Ravenna fleet for Vitellius, brings it over to Vespasian. Cæcina's treason. His army puts him in irons. Primus goes to attack Vitellius's two legions in Cremona. They march out of the city. Battle in which they are defeated. The conquerors want to attack Cremona for the sake of plunder. They are prevented by the arrival of the six legions, which Cæcina had in vain attempted to debauch. Battle by night in which they are defeated. A father killed by his son. The camp that surrounded Cremona taken. The conquerors prepare to attack the town. It surrenders. The conquered legions evacuate the place. Sack of Cremona. The city rebuilt. Primus's first cares after his victory. Vitellius's stupid indolence. Flattery of the senators. A Consul for a day. Vitellius causes Junius Blæsus to be poisoned. Valens's slowness and dissolute conduct. He misses an opportunity to join the army. Valens's bold design. He is taken prisoner. Vespasian is acknowledged by a great part of Italy, and all the western provinces. Inconsistency of Primus's conduct after the battle of Cremona. He advances towards

wards Rome. A soldier demands a reward for killing his brother. Quarrels between Primus and Mucian. Vitellius endeavours to stifle the news of the battle of Cremona. Extraordinary resolution of a centurion. He sends troops to secure the passes of the Apennine mountains. Remaining in Rome, he is taken up with other thoughts than war. He goes to his camp, but soon returns to Rome. The Misænum fleet declares for Vespasian. Terracina taken possession of by the soldiers of the fleet and their associates. Momentary zeal of the city of Rome in favour of Vitellius. The cohorts opposed against Primus are forced to submit. Valens is killed at Urbino, by order of the conquerors. Vitellius disposed to abdicate. He settles the conditions with Flavius Sabinus. Vain remonstrances made by Vitellius's most zealous partizans. Vitellius abdicates. The people and soldiers oppose it, and force him to return to the palace. Battle in which Sabinus is worsted. He retires to the capitol. The capitol besieged and taken by Vitellius's soldiers. The temple of Jupiter burnt. Domitian escapes the enemy. Death of Sabinus. His character. The town of Terracina surprized and burnt by L. Vitellius. The victorious army did not make haste enough to Rome. Causes of the delay. On the news of the capitol's being besieged, the army marches forward. Vitellius's deputation rejected. The city taken. Strange mixture of licentious diversions and cruelty. The prætorian camp forced. Vitellius's tragical death. Death of his brother and son. Vespasian marries off his daughter.

A.R. 820. *ter. The freeman Asiaticus suffers the death*
 A. C. 69. *ordained for slaves.*

The heads of Vitellius's party in Illyria, hold a council about the plan of war most proper for them to follow.
Tac. Hist. III. 1—5.

IN Vespasian's party all remained true, and fortune answered their desires. The chief officers of the Pannonian troops met, to hold a council at Petau on the Drave, where the thirteenth legion had its winter quarters, being returned back to its provinces after having finished the amphitheatres of Cremona and Bologna before mentioned, Tacitus calls three of those officers, T. Ampius Flavianus, Antonius Primus, and Cornelius Fuscus.

Ampius who had been consul, and was commander in chief of the Pannonian legions; was most eminent in dignity, but least in credit of the three. The soldiers distrusted him because he was allied to Vitellius, and suspected him of wanting to betray the party he pretended to serve. And in fact the conduct of that old man, at once timid and ambitious, gave room to form that judgment. When the legions first began to stir, he was terrified and fled from Italy: but in hopes of gaining honour and distinction, was afterwards prevailed on to return to his post by Cornelius Fuscus, who indeed did not expect to find any great resource in his talents, but very properly judged, that the name of a man of consular dignity, would be a sanction to an infant party.

I have already described Antonius Primus. He had gained the confidence of the troops, by his decisive manners, and an audaciousness that set all at defiance. When Vespasian's letters were read to the Pannonian army, most of the officers

officers were cautious what they said : they weighed their words, and expressed themselves ambiguously, fluctuating between the two parties, and studying subterfuges to answer all events. Primus's declaration was clear and positive ; and the soldiers were delighted to find he did not separate his interest from theirs, but embarked with them, and prepared to share their disgraces, or the glory of success. He behaved with the same haughtiness on all occasions. And by that means, though no more than commander of a legion, acquired a more than consular authority. The next to him in point of esteem was the intendant Cornelius Fuscus, who, keeping no measures with Vitellius, but perpetually lashing him severely, left himself no room for hopes, in case their enterprize should miscarry.

The three I have been speaking of, being assembled, held, as I said, a council with several others, to deliberate on the plan of war it was most proper for them to follow. Two methods might have been taken : the one, to guard closely all the passages of the Pannonian Alps till the troops they expected from the East should arrive : the other, to go on, seek the enemy, and dispute the possession of Italy. Those who were for temporizing, laid a great stress on the strength and reputation of the German legions, to which Vitellius had added the flower of the British. They represented, " That as to them, they could not depend on
" equalling the number, * nor even courage
" of

* *Ipsis nec numerum parum pulsarum nuper legionum ; & quanquam ferociter loquerentur, minorem esse apud victos animum. Tac.*

A. R. 820. " of their adversaries. That their legions, but
 A. C. 69. " lately beaten, talked indeed of great things ;
 " but that the conquered are always fearful in
 " the presence of their conquerors. Whereas,
 " by making a rampart of the Alps, Mucian
 " would have time to come up with a power-
 " ful reinforcement ; whilst Vespasian, by re-
 " maining behind, had infinite resources in the
 " sea, the fleets, and the affection of the richest
 " provinces of the empire, which would enable
 " him to double his forces, and, as it were,
 " be ready for a second war. In a word, that
 " great advantages might be gained, but no
 " dangers run, by a prudent deliberation."

Speech of
 Antonius
 Primus,
 who pro-
 posed en-
 tering Ita-
 ly directly.

Antonius Primus was too ardent to approve
 a counsel, which to him seemed the effect of
 fear ; and therefore undertook to prove, that
 diligence and activity could not but be of ser-
 vice to them, and hurtful to Vitellius. " Vic-
 " tory, said he, has inspired those we are go-
 " ing to attack, less with a noble courage than
 " a weak security : for they have not been
 " kept within a camp, nor subject to military
 " exercises. Used * to idleness in every town
 " of Italy where they have been, formidable
 " to none but their hosts, the more their man-
 " ners were barbarous and savage before, the
 " more they plunged themselves into pleasures,
 " till then unknown to them. The circus,
 " theatres, and other diversions of the city
 " have enervated, and sickness has weakened
 " them. But if you give them time, war will
 " recover their strength, and they will receive
 " succours

* Per omnia Italiae municipia desides, tantum hospiti-
 bus metuendos, quanto ferocius ante se egerint, tanto
 cupidius insolitas voluptates hausisse. Tac.

“succours from every quarter. Germany is A.R. 820.
“not far distant; Britain is separated but by A. C. 69.
“a narrow arm of the sea; the Gauls and
“Spain will supply them with men, horses
“and money: Italy itself, and the riches of
“Rome, are great advantages to them: and if
“they should want to come to us, they have
“two fleets at their command, and the Illyrian
“sea open to them. Of what use will the bar-
“riers of our mountains be to us then? What
“shall we have gained by deferring the war
“from year to year? From whence shall we
“in the mean time receive money and provi-
“sions? If we reckon the number of soldiers
“rather than of legions, the greater strength
“is on our side, and ours are less disorderly
“and licentious: even the shame of having
“been defeated, has made us more attentive,
“and observe a stricter discipline. As to our
“cavalry, that was not conquered even in the
“unfortunate day of Bedriac, but had, even
“though our troops were worsted, the glory
“of breaking the enemy. If two regiments
“of horse could put Vitellius’s army in con-
“fusion, we now have sixteen: and what may
“we not expect from their valour? Our ad-
“versaries, who have quite forgot the art of
“war, will not be able to bear their shock,
“but, surrounded by them, as by an immense
“cloud, will, men and horses, be instantly
“crushed to death. I myself * will, if per-
“mitted,

* Nisi quis retinet, idem suator, auctorque consilii ero. Vos, quibus fortuna in integro est, legiones continete: mihi expeditæ cohortes sufficient. Jam reseratam Italiam, impulsas Vitellii res audietis. Juvabit sequi, & vestigiis vincentis insistere. *Tac.*

A.R. 820. "mitted, execute what I now advise. Do you,
 A. C. 69. "who think you have stronger reasons to take
 "care of yourselves, remain here with the le-
 "gions : all I want is a few cohorts, and not
 "to be troubled with any baggage. You shall
 "soon hear the passages into Italy are open,
 "and that Vitellius trembles on his throne. It
 "will be easy for you to follow me, and march
 "in the victorious steps of one, who will pre-
 "pare the way for you."

His advice
 is followed.

Whilst Primus was speaking thus, his eyes darted fire, and he raised his voice in order to be heard at a distance ; for the centurions and several soldiers had got into the council chamber. So bold and vehement a speech took effect. Even those who most valued themselves on prudence and circumspection, could not but yield to it. The soldiers in general, seized with a kind of enthusiasm, praised nothing but Primus, and looked on him with admiration, as the only man of courage, and the only person fit for command : they taxed all others with cowardice, and judged them deserving of the highest contempt.

A resolution being taken to carry the war into Italy, letters were dispatched to Aponius Saturninus to hasten with the Mælian legions. That the provinces which were going to be left unprovided with troops, might not be exposed to the incursions of barbarians, the Roman generals prevailed on the princes of the Jazygan Sarmatians to go with them to the war, that their subjects, being without a chief, might not be in a condition to undertake any enterprize. Those princes offered to carry with them some troops of cavalry, for that
 nation

nation never fought but on horseback. How-
 ever it was thought most prudent not to rely
 so far on them, but to have them alone and
 without attendants, rather as hostages than as
 allies. On the contrary, the succours brought
 by Sido and Italicus, kings of the Suevi, were
 gladly received, for they had given proofs of
 an unshaken fidelity, and their nation was
 thought more capable of real attachment. Some
 disturbance was likewise feared from Rhætia,
 the intendant of which province Porcius Septi-
 mius, was a staunch and incorruptible friend
 to Vitellius. Sextilius Felix was opposed to
 him, with orders to guard the river Inn with a
 regiment of horse, eight cohorts, and what
 troops had been raised in Noricum. By that
 means every thing was kept quiet in those
 parts, whilst the fate of the two contending
 parties was to be decided in Italy.

Antonius Primus kept his word, and shewed
 in action the same boldness that he had done
 in council. He formed in haste a small body
 of horse and foot, with which he immediately
 set out. He took a companion like himself,
 a brave warrior, but not the most strictly vir-
 tuous of men. Arrius Varus, for that was
 the name of the officer we are speaking of, had
 served with distinction under Corbulo in the
 Armenian wars. It is assured that he had en-
 deavoured to prejudice Nero against his gene-
 ral, in hopes of advancing himself, by falsely
 slandering and aspersing his character; and that
 he was indebted * to that villanous trick for
 the rank of first captain of a legion: a fine
 beginning

He exe-
 cutes him-
 self what
 he had ad-
 vised.
 His first
 exploits.
Tac. Hist.
 III. 6.

* *Infami gratia primum pilum adepto, læta ad præ-
 sens male parta, mox in perniciem vertere. Tac.*

A.R.820. beginning of fortune, as he thought, but which
 A. C. 69. served only to bring ruin upon him. He was
 now triumphant, and shared with Antonius
 Primus the glory of Vespasian's party's first
 success in Italy.

* Oderzo.
 † Tour
 d'Altino.
 ‡ Este.

The first thing they did was to take Aquilæ; from whence advancing forward, they were received in the cities of Opitergium *, Altinum †, Padua, and Ateste ‡. At this last place they learnt, that three cohorts and a regiment of horse held for Vitellius the place then called *Forum Allieni*, now Ferrara; and that having thrown a bridge there over the Po, they kept but a bad look out. The opportunity seemed favourable to attack them. Primus and Varus surprized them at break of day, and finding most of them unarmed, easily got the better. They had ordered no blood to be shed, except of such as should make an obstinate resistance, and to force the others by terror to change sides. In fact, some submitted at once, but the greater number breaking down the bridge prevented the conquerors pursuing them.

This fortunate beginning, gave a reputation to Primus's arms, who at the same time received a strong reinforcement by the arrival of two legions from Pannonia at Padua. He was willing likewise to do honour to the cause he defended, by replacing, in all the cities of which he became master, the statues of Galba, a prince incapable of governing, as we have seen, but whose name was become an object of veneration when compared with Otho and Vitellius.

The

The next thing considered was, where to form their magazine of arms, and fix the center of the war. Verona was pitched upon as a powerful colony, the conquest of which would be of great advantage in itself; and, being surrounded by extensive plains, seemed particularly to suit an army superior to their enemies in horse. The work was immediately set about, and by the way Vicenza was taken; a place of small importance, but which being the town where Cæcina was born, was on that account remarkable at that time, and a kind of trophy gained over the general of the adverse party. Verona did not cost Primus much more trouble, though it was of far greater consequence. Besides the advantages I have already mentioned, that place was by its situation one of the keys of Italy, and when in possession of Vespasian's troops, cut off all communication between Cæcina and Rhætia and Germany.

All this was done without Vespasian's even knowing of it, and indeed contrary to his intentions: for he had ordered the Illyrian legions to stay at Aquilæa till Mucian joined them. He even entered into a detail of the reasons why he gave those orders; telling them, that as he was master of the richest provinces, and especially Egypt, the granary of Italy, he hoped to end the war without bloodshed, and to force Vitellius's legions to submit for want of money and provisions. Mucian backed him, sending letter after letter to the same purport. He did not cease representing the beauty of a victory gained without bloodshed; concealing under that his true motives, which were no other than jealousy, and a desire to engross

A. R. 820. engross the whole honour of the war. But
 A. C. 69. orders and councils from so great a distance
 always came too late, and did not arrive till
 things were done.

*Cæcina
 purposely
 misses an
 opportu-
 nity of
 crushing
 Antonius
 Primus.*

Primus being master of Verona, attacked the enemies advanced guard; the skirmish was but slight, and no advantage gained on either side. Cæcina pitched his camp between Ostilia, and the marches of Tartaro, where he entrenched himself. The post was a good one; his rear being covered by the river, and his flanks by the marches. If Cæcina had intended to serve his emperor faithfully, he might, by collecting together all Vitellius's troops, have crushed the two legions in which Primus's whole strength then consisted, and have forced them to abandon their conquests by a shameful flight, and leave Italy: but by * studying delay he gave the enemy the greatest advantages that can be given in war, time and opportunity, amusing himself with writing letters of reproach to those whom he might have driven away by force, till he had agreed on the terms on which he was to betray his trust. In the mean time Primus received a fresh reinforcement. Aponius Saturninus governor of Mæsia, brought him a legion commanded by the tribune Vipstanus Messala, an officer † of distinguished birth and great personal merit, who following the example of the old Romans, joined

* *Cæcina per varias moras, prima hostibus prodidit tempora belli, dum quos armis pellere promptum erat, epistolis increpat, donec per nuntios pacta perfidiæ firmaret, Tac.*

† *Clarior majoribus, egregius ipse, & qui solus ad id bellum artes bonas attulisset. Tac.*

joined a knowledge of the liberal arts to the A.R. 829.
 profession of arms, and was the only officer in A. C. 69.
 this war whose views were honest and upright. *Auct. de Causis*

Notwithstanding this reinforcement, Primus *Corr. eloq. Tac. Hist. III. 9.*
 was still greatly inferior to Cæcina. But the
 latter, instead of taking advantage of the enemy's
 weakness to give them battle, wrote them a
 letter, in which he taxed them with being rash
 and inconsiderate, in attempting to revive a
 party already conquered. He boasted of the
 formidable strength of the German army, speak-
 ing modestly and but little of Vitellius, and
 making use of no one disrespectful expression
 towards Vespasian. In short, his letter con-
 tained nothing that could neither corrupt or
 intimidate the enemy.

The chiefs of the adverse party answered in
 a very different style. They took no notice
 of the article relating to the defeat of their
 legions when they fought for Otho: but ex-
 pressed a noble confidence in the justice of their
 cause, and a full assurance of success: they
 spoke of Vespasian in pompous terms, called
 Vitellius an enemy, and concluded with trying
 the fidelity of the officers, to whom they pro-
 mised the same ranks they enjoyed under Vi-
 tellius, and pretty plainly invited Cæcina to
 join them. Cæcina's letter and their answer
 were read to a general assembly of the legions,
 and proved an additional encouragement to the
 troops, whose hearts were elated when they
 compared Cæcina's low and humble style with
 the haughty confident language of their own
 leaders. They no longer doubted being vic-
 torious. Two other legions joining them soon
 after, they thought they might venture to shew
 their

A.R. 820. their strength, and accordingly marching out.
 A. C. 69. of Verona, formed their camp under the walls of that city.

The two consuls who gave umbrage to Antonius Primus, removed by two seditions.

The pre-eminence in this army belonged of right to Ampius Flavianus, and Aponius Saturninus, both of them being of consular rank: so that though Antonius Primus had the real command, yet he had not the honour of it, and might be cramped in the exertion of his power by an indispensable deference, at least in appearance, for those who by their titles and dignities were superior to him. Two seditions, which closely followed each other, delivered him from both those objects of his jealousy: and if he who reaps the fruit of a crime may be thought the author of it, it would be difficult not to believe Primus the secret promoter and instigator of the insurrection, though he omitted nothing to prevent its going to extremes.

Flavianus was attacked first. On a false alarm, which made a few distant squadrons of their allies horse be taken for a body of enemies, one of the Pannonian legions ran to arms, accused Flavianus of treason, and demanded his death. There was no manner of proof nor indication of treachery, but the seditious cried out, it was not fit to let live a man related to Vitellius; a traitor to Otho, and unjust to the soldiers, at whose expence he enriched himself. No prayers or entreaties could avail. In vain did Flavianus, prostrate on the earth, hold out his suppliant hands towards them, rend his garments, and shed tears of anguish. The soldiers, bent on his destruction, took even those marks of fear, for proof of his remorse of conscience.

Aponius

Aponius Saturninus ran to his colleague's assistance ; but a menacing murmur and turbulent clamour stopt his mouth the moment he attempted to speak. Primus was the only one the soldiers were disposed to hear. Finding their rage run high, and that they were just ready to proceed from words to deeds, having their hands already on their swords, he ordered Flavianus to be seized and put in irons. The seditious, seeing through the artifice, and dispersing the guards that surrounded the tribunal, prepared to satisfy their revenge themselves. Primus did not desire Flavianus's death, for that would have rendered his own ambition too odious. He ran towards the furious soldiers, and presenting his neck, and drawing his sword, protested he would die either by their hands or his own : and wherever he saw any one he knew, who had distinguished himself by his bravery, and merited military rewards, he called him by his name, and begged he would join him. Then turning towards the eagles, and the images of the gods supposed to preside over war, he beseeched them to send such fury and fatal discord to their enemies, but to avert it from them. The rage of the troops began at last to subside, and night coming on, each retired to his tent. Flavianus set out that very night to go to Vespasian, from whom he received letters on the road bidding him be easy, and assuring him that his innocence could admit of no suspicion.

The contagious spirit of sedition, without doubt privately encouraged by Primus, spread from the Pannonian to the Mæsan army, which rose against its general Aponius, on account
of

A.R. 820. of some pretended letters from him to Vitellius handed about the camp. This sedition was more furious than the former, because it did not break out in the evening, a time, when soldiers are pretty well spent with the fatigues of the day, but at noon. The two armies seemed to rival each other in petulance and frenzy. The Mæsiens demanded the assistance of the Pannonian legions, in return for the service they had been of to them against Flavianus; and the latter, thinking their comrades sedition justified theirs, were glad of an opportunity to commit the same fault over again. Aponius was at a country-house near the camp: thither the sedition ran, and if he escaped the death they intended him, it was more owing to the obscurity of the place where he hid himself, than to the efforts of the commanders of the legions, with Primus at their head. He concealed himself in the stove of an old bath; and when the danger was over, got to Padua without noise, or any of his lictors to attend him.

Flavianus and Aponius being thus forced to retire, Antonius remained sole commander of the two armies, none of his colleagues daring to rival him, because the troops had confidence in none but him.

Bassus, who commanded the Ravenna fleet for Vitellius, brings it over to Vespasian. *Tac. Hist. li. 12.*

The ferment was not less violent in Vitellius's party, and the consequences of it were still more fatal, because it proceeded from the treachery of the chief officers, and not from the caprice of the soldiers. Lucilius Bassus, had long been tampering with, and endeavouring to corrupt the fidelity of the Ravenna fleet, of which he had the command: and what helped

helped him to succeed the more easily in that design was, that numbers of his men had been raised in Dalmatia and Pannonia, both which provinces were in Vespasian's interest. When he judged matters ripe, he chose the depth of night for the execution of his treason; and after ordering all that were in the plot, to meet in the great square within the camp, he, like a cowardly traitor, shut himself up in his house, waiting the event: the captains of the ships broke to pieces Vitellius's images, without much resistance; and the small number of those who attempted to revenge their emperor being immediately killed, the rest readily declared for Vespasian. Lucilius then appeared, and the enterprize having succeeded, ventured to own himself the author of it.

He had no great room to rejoice in what he had done, for he lost the command of the fleet, every man insisting on having Cornelius Fuscus for admiral. Fuscus repaired thither with all haste, and setting a guard over Bassus, with orders however to treat him honourably, he sent him by sea to *Adria* *, where the commanding officer used him with much more rigour and put him in irons; till a freeman of Vespasian's, called Hormus, who was likewise a general officer, came there and set him at liberty.

Cæcina waited only for Bassus's defection to declare himself. Having taken the precaution to remove under various pretences those whom he most distrusted, he assembled the chief centurions and some soldiers, and haranguing them, exalted Vespasian's eminent merit, and the superiority of his forces. He observed, that

* *Adri* is
the upper
Abruzzo.

Cæcina's
treason.
His army
puts him
in irons.

A.R. 820. that on the contrary, the revolt of the Ravenna
A. C. 69. fleet, deprived Vitellius's party of the absolutely necessary means of being supplied with provisions of any kind; that Spain and Gaul were estranged, and every thing ready in Rome for a change of government: in short he omitted nothing that could give a bad idea of Vitellius and his situation. Those who were in the secret applauded the speech, and immediately swore allegiance to Vespasian: the rest, surprized at so unexpected a novelty, followed their example.

An account of what was doing being brought to the camp, the soldiers ran in crowds to the head quarters, where they saw Vespasian's name set up, and Vitellius's images thrown down. Surprize and grief made them motionless at first; but all, animated with the same spirit, soon broke out, "What! said they, has the
 " Germanic army so degenerated, that we,
 " without fighting, without even drawing our
 " swords, should deliver up our arms, and
 " hold out our hands to chains! What are
 " the legions opposed against us, but those
 " we have already conquered? And even they
 " are now destitute of what was their main
 " strength and support in Otho's army, the
 " first and fourteenth legions, which however
 " we likewise put to flight, and cut to pieces.
 " Shall then the fruit of our victory be, to be
 " sold with our arms like a troop of slaves, to
 " a Primus, a man void of honour, and stigmatized with banishment? Shall vile * machines dictate laws to eight legions? So Cæcina

* The Romans thought the sea service inferior to the land.

"cina and Bassus have ordained ; base ungrate-A.R. 820.
 "ful traitors, who after plundering their prince, A. C. 69.
 "and stripping him of his palaces, gardens,
 "and riches, would now rob him of his sol-
 "diers too. No ! Were we to submit to so
 "shameful a bargain ; were we, unhurt by any
 "check, and not having lost one drop of
 "blood, cowardly enough to bend to the yoke,
 "those we should acknowledge for masters
 "could not but hold us in the utmost con-
 "tempt. What answer should we be able to
 "make, if asked what was become of our
 "former glory, our past success, and the con-
 "stancy with which we have so often borne
 "the frowns of fortune."

Such were the speeches indignation put in
 the mouths of one and all. At last the fifth
 legion, setting the others an example, exalted
 Vitellius's images again, put Cæcina in irons,
 and chose Fabius Fabullus, commander of the
 fifth legion, and Cassius Longus, prefect of the
 camp, to head them. So great was their rage
 and fury, that the unfortunate marines, who
 had no concern in the defection of the fleet,
 happening to fall into their hands, were mas-
 sacred without pity. They left their camp,
 broke down the bridge they had thrown over
 the Tartaro, marched back to Ostiglia, and
 took the road to Cremona, in order to join the
 two legions Cæcina had sent thither with part
 of the horse.

Antonius Primus resolved to prevent their ^{Primus}
 junction, and attack the enemies whilst their ^{goes to at-}
 forces were separated, and their minds sour- ^{tack Vitel-}
 ed by a spirit of discord, before their new ge- ^{lius's two}
 nerals could acquire much authority, or the ^{legions in}
^{Cremona.}
 soldiers ^{Tac. Hist.}
^{III. 15.}

A.R. 320. soldiers be accustomed to obey them. Other
 A. C. 69. motives too induced him to make haste. He knew that Fabius Valens, a man incapable of infidelity, and by no means ignorant in the art of war, was already set out from Rome, and would certainly proceed with all possible diligence, so soon as he should hear of Cæcina's treason. He likewise feared Vitellius might receive succours from Germany by the way of Rhætia: that the Gauls, Spain, and Britain, might send him more; and that, when collected, they would together compose a formidable army, which it might be very difficult to resist. He therefore justly concluded that victory depended on dispatch; and accordingly set out from Verona with his whole army, in order to attack the legions in Cremona, and in two days arrived at Bedriac.

The next day he fortified this post; and, whilst the legions were forming the camp, gave orders to the auxiliary cohorts, to make a general forage on the Cremonian territories, with a view, * says Tacitus, to accustom his soldiers to plunder the citizens, and give them a relish for ill-got booty. Himself advanced eight miles beyond Bedriac with four thousand horse to cover his foragers, and sent out scouts to bring him intelligence of the enemy's motions.

They

march out
 of the city.
 Battle, in
 which they
 are defeat-
 ed.

Towards the fifth hour of the day, that is to say, an hour before noon, a horseman arrived full speed, with news that the enemy was drawing near, preceded by a detachment of cavalry; and that the noise, and murmur of a great multitude was heard at a distance.

Whilst

* Ut specie parandarum copiarum civili præda miles imbueretur. *Tac.*

Whilst Primus was consulting what he had best A.R. 820.
to do, Arrius Varus, eager to signalize himself, A. R. 69.
flew like lightening with a few others, brave
and determined as himself, and attacked Vi-
telliuss's troops with such impetuosity, that he
immediately put them to flight. But fortune
soon changed, and the fugitives receiving a
reinforcement, rallied, returned to the charge,
and by the superiority of their numbers, forced
Varus and his troop to fly in their turn.

Primus foresaw what would happen. He
exhorted his men to behave well; opened his
squadrons to receive Varus and his horse in
the centre; sent orders to the legions to arm,
and made a signal to the foragers to leave off
plundering, and come to the battle. Varus
and his troop arrived in inexpressible disorder,
spreading round them the terror they were
struck with: their ranks were broke, every
one was dismayed, and Primus in danger of
being totally defeated.

All that could be done by the ablest of ge-
nerals, and best of soldiers, was performed by
him in this dangerous crisis. He encouraged
the fearful, comforted the dubious, was every
where, and in the hottest parts of the battle:
such was his ardour, that he killed with his
own hand an ensign who was flying, and snatch-
ing up his standard, turned it against the ene-
my. About an hundred horse, ashamed to
abandon so brave a commander, stuck close
to him, and were favoured by the situation of
the ground. They were in a narrow road;
where the ruins of a bridge, formerly built
over a stream that crossed the plain, their un-
certainty of the depth of the several currents

A.R. 320. formed by those ruins, and the steepness of
A. C. 69. the banks, were so many obstacles to flight.

The happy necessity they were under of standing their ground saved the army. Primus with this handful of men, received in good order the conquerors so hot in their pursuit that not a man of them kept his rank, but all was in confusion; and finding such a resistance as they were far from expecting, began in their turns to be troubled and disconcerted. Primus perceiving it, charged them with all his might, and in a moment the scene was a second time changed, and fortune declared decisively for Primus. The victorious shouts of his men brought back the fugitives, who rejoined their comrades, and after escaping the danger, returned to share the success with them. Thus were the horse, that preceded the legions who left Cremona, entirely defeated.

Those legions, animated by the first advantage their horse had gained, were advanced about four thousand paces from the city. They might, had they been well commanded, either have made fortune turn once more, or at least put a stop to Primus's victory. But they had no general by whose orders to direct their motions. They did not open their ranks to receive their horse pursued by the victor, nor march up to the enemy, nor take advantage of their superiority over Primus's men, fatigued by a hard battle. Fluctuating and not knowing what to do, they waited for them, and were vigorously attacked. At the same time the tribune Messala, brought up the Mæisian auxiliaries, who, by observing a strict discipline, were grown as good soldiers as the legions

legions themselves. The victorious horse, A.R. 820.
backed by that infantry, broke the two le- A.C. 69.
gions, who made the less resistance, as Cremona was near, to which place they could again return and take shelter there. They did so, and Primus did not think proper to pursue them; well satisfied with having ended so happily a battle so ill begun, and in which his whole troop, men and horses, were wounded and quite spent.

Towards evening all Primus's forces got together again. The legions he had sent for The conquerors want to attack Cremona, for the sake of plunder. were arrived at Bedriac, and his foragers had time to return. This multitude of soldiers, full of confidence, and having under their eyes the traces of recent victory, concluded the war over, and wanted to be led on to Cremona to complete that victory, by the submission, either voluntary or forced, of the conquered. That was the specious pretence under which they concealed their real motive, which they dared not to own, desire of plunder. But they said among themselves, "That a town, situated in a plain, might easily be carried by storm: that if they got into it that night, they would be at full liberty to plunder; whereas if they stayed till the next day, offers would be made to surrender and capitulate: and that the only reward of their fatigue and wounds would then be, the empty honour of clemency; whilst their officers would have all the solid profits of the Cremonian spoils. That * the plunder of a town taken by storm belonged
" of

* *Expugnatae urbis prædam ad militem, deditæ ad ducis pertinere. Tac.*

A. R. 820. "of right to the soldiers; and that of such as
 A. C. 69. "capitulated, to the officers." The tribunes
 and centurions remonstrated all they could
 against their rash design; but the soldiers
 would not listen to them, and made a din and
 clattering with their arms, to prevent their be-
 ing heard; in short, they were ready to take
 orders from themselves, if none else would
 give them such as they liked.

Primus was the only one that could obtain
 audience; and even he was forced to wave his
 authority, and proceed by way of insinuation.
 He approved and commended their readiness
 to fight; but desired them to consider, it was
 the business of their generals to lead them on to
 battle; and that if a soldier's * glory consisted
 in his eagerness to brave danger, a prudent
 slowness was not less requisite in their chief.
 He then represented to them, how rash it would
 be to attack in the night a town, to which they
 did not know the ways of access, by which the
 hazard of snares, favoured by the dark, would
 be joined to the other perils of a difficult en-
 terprize. He asked them, addressing himself
 to some in particular, whether they had got
 hatchets and other instruments necessary for a
 sap; and on their answering they had not,
 "What! (added he) do you then think to
 break down walls with your swords and
 spears? Let us wait the return of day.
 "The night shall be employed in bringing all
 "things

* *Divisa inter exercitum ducesque munia. Militibus
 cupidinem pugnandi convenire: duces providendo, con-
 sultando, contatione sæpius, quam temeritate, prodesse.*
Tac.

“ things necessary from the camp, and to-mor- A.R. 820.
 “ row Cremona is ours.” A. C. 69.

Accordingly Primus ordered a detachment of horse to go with the followers of the army to Bedriac, and bring from thence every thing necessary for the attack of the place. But so great was the obstinacy of the soldiers, and so little did they know how to obey, that they would have proceeded to a sedition, had they not that moment received news that stopt them. Some horse advancing near the walls of Cremona, made prisoners of some of the inhabitants whom they met with, and learnt from them that the six legions, and all the troops posted near the Tarato, being informed of their comrades defeat, were expected instantly, and had that very day marched thirty thousand paces, with a firm resolution to fight and retrieve the honour of their party. This danger got the better of the soldiers obstinacy, and disposed them to listen to their commander's advice, in consequence of which they drew up for battle.

Primus had five legions. He placed the third, of which we have often made mention before, precisely on the causeway of the Postumian way. The four others were posted on the right and left, two on each side. Such at least was the order in which the eagles and standards were ranged : for as to the soldiers of the legions, all confounded together pel-mel in the dark, they took their posts wherever chance directed them. The prætorians, whom Vespasian had called back to their standards, were near the third legion ; the auxiliary cohorts next the wings : the horse covered the flanks and rear of the army ; and the kings,

Sido

They are prevented by the arrival of the six legions, which Cæcina had in vain attempted to debauch.

* Thirty miles.

Battle by night, in which they are defeated.

A.R. 820. Sido and Italicus, with the flower of their
A. C. 69. Suevi, formed the first line.

Vitellius's legions ought to have gone into Cremona to rest and refresh themselves, and the next day have attacked their adversaries; who, perished with hunger and cold, would not have been able to resist them: but they had no man of sense or prudence to direct them, and, about the third hour of the night, began to skirmish with their adversaries, who waited their coming, and who, being old troops, and used to war, placed themselves of their own accord in as good order as the darkness of a winter night would permit, for this happened towards the end of October. The soldiers of the legions, but lately defeated, joined those that arrived from Ostiglia; and ranked under their standards.

The two armies fought in the dark, with success as various as the confusion was horrid. Courage, strength, and skill, were useless where they could not see each other. Both sides were armed alike: the word, by being so often given and returned, was as well known by foes as friends: their very standards were mixed, according as a party on either side got the better, and forced them one way or the other.

One of the legions on the left of Primus's army suffered greatly, losing six of its best captains, and some standards. The eagle was however saved by the extraordinary valour of Atilius Verus, first captain of that legion, who lost his life in defence of it. Primus made the prætorians advance to back the troops who began to give way there; and they at first repulsed the enemy, but were afterwards driven
back

back themselves, not being able to resist the showers of darts Vitellius's troops poured upon them from their engines placed on the causeway, where being well served, and having nothing about them to embarrass their operations, they dealt sure destruction round. A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.

One engine in particular greatly annoyed Primus's army, sweeping away whole ranks with the enormous masses of stone, it lanced upon them with prodigious force. The slaughter would have been dreadful, if the admirable valour of two soldiers had not stopt it. Covering themselves with their shields, they made their way up to the dreadful machine without being perceived, and cutting the ropes by which it was worked, rendered it useless. They were killed instantly, and their names perished with them : but the remembrance of so brave a deed survived, and well deserved not to be buried in oblivion.

The night was already far spent, and the fate of the battle still uncertain, when the moon rose, and enabled the combatants to distinguish objects, but with a very important difference to the two armies. Primus's troops had their back turned towards it, and consequently their shadows being thrown forward, deceived their enemies, who took those shadows for bodies, and aimed their darts at them accordingly. On the contrary, the light shining in the faces of Vitellius's soldiers, they were easily distinguished, and could not guard against blows proceeding from the dark.

Primus redoubled his activity the moment he was able to see and be seen. He went through every rank, varying his exhortations
and

A.R. 820. and motives of encouragement, according to
 A. C. 69. the different situation of those to whom he
 spoke, rousing up the courage of some by
 reproaches, and praising and commending
 others, but presenting the most flattering
 hopes to all. If he addressed himself to the
 Pannonian legions who were conquered fight-
 ing for Otho, he asked them why they had
 taken up arms again. He told them, the plains
 on which they were then fighting, were the
 very same where they had been seen to fly, and
 that they could not wish for a fairer opportu-
 nity to efface their shame and retrieve their ho-
 nour. Then stepping to the Mælian legions,
 he represented to them, that it was they who
 had given the signal for war in favour of Ves-
 pasian, and that it was in vain for them to
 bid defiance to Vitellius's party in words only,
 if, when they came to action, they were unable
 to cope with them. He heaped praises on the
 third legion, which, for a century past, had
 always behaved with distinguished bravery, and
 reminded those troops of their exploits, under
 Anthony, against the Parthians; under Cor-
 bulo, against the Armenians; and, but lately,
 against the Sarmatians*. The prætorians gave
 room for reproaches, nor did he spare them.
 "Soldiers (said he to them) unworthy that
 "name, if you do not gain the victory now,
 "what hopes have you left? Broken, and
 "again restored, to what other emperor will
 "you have recourse, if you are beaten now?
 "Into what other camp can you think to be
 "received? Your standards and arms are in
 "the enemy's hands: either win them back,
 "or expect inevitable death. I say nothing
 "to

* See Book

III.

111.

* to you of your infamy, for that can make A. R. 820.
“ no impression on you ; you have no feeling A. C. 69.
“ left.” Loud shouts and cries were heard
on all sides, and the sun rising just then,
the soldiers of the third legion saluted it, as
was customary in Syria, where they had always
served till of late years.

A report, the author of which was unknown,
or which perhaps was purposely spread by
Primus, contributed not a little to the victory.
On a sudden it was given out through every
rank, that Mucian was arrived. Encouraged
by the thoughts of so strong a reinforcement,
Primus's troops advanced upon the enemy,
whose ranks began to be thin, because that
army having no commander in chief, every man
in it consulted his own bravery or cowardice,
and accordingly chose the front or rear of the
battle. Primus, perceiving them give way,
pressed still more closely, till at last he broke
and put them in such confusion, that they
could not rally again, on account of the car-
riages and machines of war, with which they
were incumbered. The conquerors had no-
thing more to do but to pursue and kill.

A very tragical event happened in that
slaughter: a son killed his father. The fol-
lowing are the circumstances of that shocking
deed. Julius Mansuetus, a native of Spain,
entered into the service of the German legions,
leaving a young son at home. That son,
growing up, was enlisted into a legion raised
by Galba in Spain: and that legion espousing
Vespasian's cause, the father and son were en-
gaged in different parties. The son meeting
him in the battle I am speaking of, and not
knowing

A father
killed by
his son.

A.R. 820. knowing him, felled him with his sword, and
 A. C. 69. whilst he was stripping him, was known by, and
 knew his own father. He cried, lamented,
 and embraced his dying parent, and with a
 mournful voice beseeched him to forgive an un-
 designed parricide: "Impute it * (said he) to
 "the guilt of civil war, and not to me. What
 "I do is but a small part of what is perform-
 "ed by multitudes. What is a single soldier
 "to a whole army?" Those who were near
 observed what passed: they told it to others,
 who reported it again, and the whole army
 was soon informed of it. Each † strove who
 should express the greatest grief, indignation
 and horror against so cruel a war: though even
 whilst they were talking in that manner, it did
 not prevent their stripping their own relations
 and friends, killed in the same battle. They
 complained of the impious crime committed
 by one, but at the same time all imitated it.

The camp
 that sur-
 rounded
 Cremona
 taken.

Primus's troops, encouraged by their suc-
 cess, were indefatigable. After fighting all
 day and all night, they thought nothing done
 whilst any thing remained still to do, and
 wanted to attack Cremona, where the fugitives
 had taken shelter. That was no easy enterprize.
 In the war against Otho, the German legions
 had formed a camp round the town, and that
 camp was defended by a ditch and parapet, to
 which fortifications other works had been lately
 added.

* Publicum id facinus: & unum militem quorum ci-
 vilium armorum partem? Tac.

† Hinc per omnem aciem miraculum, & questus, &
 sævissime belli execratio. Neo eo segnius propinquos,
 affines, fratres trucidatos spoliant. Factum esse scelus
 loquuntur, faciuntque. Tac.

added. The chiefs of the victorious army A.B. 820.
A.C. 69. hesitated greatly, fearing it would be too rash in them to attempt to force the lines, and after that a place surrounded by strong walls, with their fatigued and harrassed troops. To take any other step, had its inconveniences too. If they returned to Bedriac, it was a long and painful march, and their victory became useless. To encamp within sight of the enemy, was exposing themselves to brisk sallies, by which they might be incommoded, and perhaps afford the conquered an opportunity of taking revenge. The ardour of the soldiers decided the question. They * feared danger much less than the least delay. They suspected all prudential measures; the rashest schemes were those that pleased them most; wounds, blood, and slaughter, were held at naught, when compared with the plunder they greedily expected to make. Primus yielded to their desires, and led them on, to attack the camp.

The engagement began with shooting their arrows and darting their lances at each other. But the assailants had greatly the disadvantage in that kind of fight, because their adversaries shot down from their ramparts with greater force than they could upwards. Primus gave each man his post, and formed three attacks, in order to excite emulation among the legions, and by that to add to their courage. There was a necessity of waiting, till they could procure proper implements from the country round about

* *Miles periculi, quam moræ patientior. Quippe ingrata quæ tuta, & ex temeritate spes; omnisque cædes, & vulnera, & sanguis, aviditate prædæ pensabantur. Tac.*

A.R. 820. about, such as pick-axes, hatchets and shovels,

A. C. 69. with which some brought scaling-ladders too.

When all was ready, Primus's men clapping their bucklers over their heads to form the tortoise, marched up to the gates of the camp and foot of the ramparts. Each side fought with great intelligence, for both had learned the same discipline. Vitellius's soldiers threw enormous stones upon the tortoise, and thrust their lances and long poles between the opening of the shields, till they so far broke their connections, that the assailants were uncovered, when showers of arrows and stones were poured down upon them.

Repulsed with loss of many of their men, their courage began to fail. Their chiefs perceiving it, shewed them Cremona, and promised the plunder should be theirs. Tacitus does not know to whom to impute that base expedient, which caused the ruin and desolation of one of the finest cities of Italy. Some laid it to the freeman Hormus's charge; but, according to others, Primus was the author of it. Which ever of the two it was * (says Tacitus,) their shame and guilt in that was of a piece with the rest of their conduct.

The soldiers, animated with hopes of a rich booty, no longer knew difficulty or danger. Spite † of their wounds and the streams of blood

* Neque Antonius, neque Hormus, a fama sua, quamvis pessimo flagitio, degeneravere. *Tac.*

† Non jam sanguis, neque vulnera morabantur, quin subruerent vallum, quaterentque portas, innixique humeris, & super iteratam testudinem scandentes prehensarent hostium tela brachiaque. Integri cum sauciis, semineces cum expirantibus volvuntur, varia pereuntium forma, & omni imagine mortium. *Tac.*

blood that ran, they sapped the foot of the A.R. 820 rampart, and beat the gates with great fury. A.C. 69. The boldest getting upon their comrades shoulders, or on the tortoise, which they had formed again, and being by that means on a level with their enemies, seized and wrenched their arms from them. Wounded and unwounded, live and dead, fell back together, and tumbled into the ditch. This dreadful assault afforded instances of every kind of death.

The third and seventh legions were engaged in the same attack, and disputed with each other the honour of beginning the victory, and making the first breach in the camp. Primus had posted himself in the same place, and backed them at the head of a select troop. Their obstinate fury at length got the better, and Vitellius's men, finding all resistance vain, and that their arrows only glanced over the tortoise, threw down the vast machine, with which they lanced showers of darts upon the assailants : so great a weight crushed all it fell on, but, at the same time broke down the battlements and head of the rampart. A breach was likewise made in a tower hard by ; and whilst the soldiers of the seventh legion were striving to enter it, those of the third broke open the gate with their swords and hatchets. C. Volusius, a soldier belonging to that last legion, was the first who entered, and getting upon the rampart, cried, the camp was taken. All fled in hurry and confusion : the conquerors broke in on every side, and in a moment the space between the camp and town was covered with blood and heaps of slain.

Another

A. R. 820. Another work still remained to do : Cremona
 A. C. 69. held out ; and the victors, after all they had
 suffered, still saw before them high walls, stone
 towers, gates secured with plates of iron, and
 soldiers on the walls, presenting the points of
 their arms. The inhabitants were numerous,
 and firmly attached to Vitellius. A great fair,
 held just at that time, had brought thither
 a vast concourse of people from every part of
 Italy, which proved no small additional strength
 to the besieged, and a strong incentive to the
 greediness of the besiegers, who considered how
 much more valuable their plunder must be on
 that account.

Th con-
 querors
 prepare to
 attack the
 town. It
 surrenders.

Primus ordered the best houses in the suburbs
 to be set on fire, to intimidate the Cremonians
 by the loss of their possessions. In the build-
 ings next the walls, some of which over-looked
 them, he placed his bravest men, who, with
 stones, tiles, pieces of timber they broke up,
 and burning torches, cleared the wall, and
 suffered none to appear on it. The legions
 had already began to form themselves in tor-
 toises, and showers of stones and arrows flew
 about, when at length the obstinacy of Vitel-
 lius's party gave way to reflection and fear :
 those especially who had any considerable rank
 in the army, thought it imprudent in them to
 struggle against fortune, for fear that if Cre-
 mona was taken by storm, they would have no
 hopes of pardon left, and all the wrath of the
 conqueror might fall, not only on a poor
 wretched multitude, but on the centurions and
 tribunes too, whose spoils would be of more
 value. The common soldier, not thinking
 or minding what might happen, but brutish-
 ly

ly indifferent, had no idea of surrendering *. A.C.820.
Wandering about the streets, or concealing A. R. 69.
themselves in the houses; they did not once
think of peace, though they had given over
fighting.

The chief officers came to a resolution.
They took down Vitellius's name and images;
and delivered Cæcina from his prison, begging
him to intercede for them. Cæcina †, puffed
up with pride and anger, refused their request:
they entreated earnestly, shed tears to move
him, and so many brave men were unhappily
reduced to the necessity of imploring the pro-
tection of a traitor. At last they submitted;
and threw open their gates.

Primus immediately ceased all hostilities, and
the conquered legions evacuated the place. The con-
The con-
quered le-
gions eva-
cuate the
place.
The eagles † and standards marched first: then
followed a long train of disarmed soldiers, over-
whelmed with grief, and fixing their eyes on
the ground. The conquerors were drawn up
on each side, and at first insulted and menaced
them. But when they saw them so humbled
and

* *Gregarius miles, futuri socors, & ignobilitate tutior, prestat. Vagi per vias, in domibus abdit, pacem ne tum quidem orabant, quum bellum posuissent. Tac.*

† *Aspernantem tumentemque lacrymis fatigant, extremum malorum, tot fortissimi viri, proditoris opem invocantes. Tac.*

‡ *Signa aquilasque extulere: mæstum inermium agmen, dejectis in terram oculis, sequebatur. Circumsteterunt victores, & primo ingerebant proba intentabant ictus. Mox ut præberi ora contumeliis, & posita omni ferocia cuncta victi patiebantur, subita recordatio, illos esse qui nuper Bedriaci victoriæ temperassent. Sed ubi Cæcina, prætexta Lictoribusque insignis, dimota turba, consul incessit, extrorsum victores: superbiam, sævitiamque, adeo invisa scelera sunt, etiam perfidiam, objectabant. Tac.*

A.R. 820. and abashed, and ready to bear any thing; they
 A. C. 69. then remembered they were the very same warriors, who, but a few months before, had behaved with great moderation when victors in the field of Bedriac. On the other hand, every one was incensed against Cæcina, nor could bear to see him march with all the pomp of consular dignity, clothed in the robe prætexta, and preceded by his lictors. They upbraided him with his pride, his cruelty, and, so odious
Jos. de B.
Jud. v. 13. are traitors, with his perfidy too. Primus screened him from their insults, and sent him to Vespasian, who, out of policy received him well, but did not employ him. The sequel will shew he had sufficient reason to distrust him.

Sack of
 Cremona.

So far Primus gained infinite honour. His diligence, activity, valour, and good conduct, began and ended the war: for the victory he gained over the German legions, and the taking of Cremona, decided the dispute between Vitellius and Vespasian. What remained to be done was no ways difficult, and was the natural, and as it were necessary, consequence of this first great exploit. But the sack of Cremona greatly sullied the victor's reputation.

Tac. Hist.
 III. 32.

At the very instant when the town surrendered, the soldiers, who wanted to have the plundering of it, began to hew down all the inhabitants before them, and could not, without great difficulty, be prevented by their officers. Primus, having assembled the two armies, commended the valour of the conquerors, and expressed kindness and clemency towards the conquered; but said nothing of Cremona. His silence on that head spoke sufficiently to troops

troops whose eagerness after plunder was en-^{A.R. 820.}creased by several old grudges, and a deep-^{A. C. 69.}rooted hatred. The Cremonians were thought to have been well-wishers to Vitellius's party ever since the time of Otho's war. The choice Cæcina had made of their town to give a combat of gladiators after his victory, confirmed that opinion. Whilst the thirteenth legion was at work there, preparing matters for that shew, the Cremonians, as most towns people are naturally inclined to do, had rallied bitterly the soldiers of that legion, then one of the conquered, but now victorious. Cremona became a second time the seat of war : the inhabitants had supplied Vitellius's troops with refreshments during the fight : the very women had interested themselves in the action, so far as to be in the field of battle, where some of them were killed. So many offences incensed the soldiers, whilst the riches of the colony, to which the fair, I have spoken of, was at that time a great addition, made them still more eager to plunder it.

Præmus might perhaps have found it very difficult to save Cremona, had he been so minded. But he did not even attempt it : and a kind of pun, that escaped him, was construed an intended signal to set fire to the town : for, going into the bath to wash and clean himself, being covered with blood, he complained the water was too cold, " but (added he, in the " same breath) I shall soon find it warm " enough." That expression was taken great notice of, and drew on him the whole odium of burning Cremona ; the more so, as his rank and reputation fixed the eyes of all upon him,

Vol. V. T and

A.R. 820. and quite eclipsed his colleagues. It is however A. C. 69. certain, that the town was on fire at that very time.

Forty thousand men, completely armed, entered it in a hostile manner, together with a still greater number of servants and followers of the army, more petulant, licentious and cruel than the soldiers themselves. Neither age nor dignities were a safeguard able to protect any from death, or insults worse than death. Even the old men and women were dragged about and made their sport. The young were quarrelled for by their ravishers, who tore them from each other, and both sides, after using them ill, would often fight and kill each other. Some, as they were carrying off sums of money, or precious offerings out of the temples, were met by their greedy comrades, who killed them, and seized their prey. Others, scorning to take up with what was in sight, fixed themselves like harpies on the rich inhabitants, whom they suspected to have concealed their treasures, and by blows and torments, endeavoured to extort their secret from them. They carried lighted torches in their hands, and after plundering houses and temples, set fire to them, by way of diversion. The * army being composed of various nations, some Romans, other allies, and others again foreigners, all whose manners, laws and customs were different, what was unlawful for one, was lawful to another; so that nothing escaped their fury and licentiousness. During four days,

* *Utque exercitu vario linguis, moribus, cui cives, socii, externi interessent, diversæ, cupidines, & aliud cuique fas, nec quidquam illicitum. Tac.*

days, Cremona was a prey to those wretches. A.R. 820, Every thing was burnt, sacred and profane; A.C. 69, one only temple, dedicated to the goddess Mephitis *, which stood out of the town, escaped the flames; protected, says Tacitus, by its situation, or by the divinity that presided in it; which of the two we need not be at a loss to determine. The conquered were thought to have lost in the sack of the town; and the two preceding battles, fifty thousand men. Josephus says, Primus lost four thousand five hundred officers and soldiers.

Thus was the city of Cremona destroyed in the two hundred and eighty-seventh year after its foundation. It was built by the Romans, in the first year of Hannibal's war, as we have observed in the history of the republic. Its convenient situation, and the fruitfulness of the soil, soon induced numbers of people to leave their habitations and settle there, by which means it became a very flourishing place. Its fate was uncommon, Foreign enemies had spared it, but it suffered under the civil wars; was vexed by the triumvirs, for its attachment to the cause of liberty; and ruined by Primus, fighting for Vespasian.

It recovered however from that misfortune. Primus, ashamed and confounded, and desirous to wipe off the reproaches every one laid to his charge, published an order, forbidding any Cremonian to be kept in slavery; though the inhabitants of Italy had been before-hand with him in that, by refusing to purchase any of them for slaves. Those who had taken them

2

being

* This goddess was to purify the air, and preserve men from infection.

A.R. 820. being consequently neither able to keep or sell,
A.C. 69. were barbarous enough to kill them. Such shocking inhumanity forced the friends and relations of those unhappy prisoners to purchase them privately: by which means the Cremonians soon got together again. Love of their native place brought them back to their desolate city, still dear to them: and, being encouraged by Vespasian, not only rebuilt their houses, but the richest of them were at the expence of building up again their temples and public places.

Primus's
first care
after his
victory.

Primus could not remain long by the walls of a town quite destroyed, and infected with the stench of blood and dead bodies; and therefore removed three thousand paces off. His first care was, to call the soldiers of the conquered legion, dispersed by flight and terror, back to their standards. As the war was not yet ended, and some disturbance might be feared from those legions, he did not think it prudent to leave them in Italy, but dispersed them in Illyria, a province well-affected to Vespasian.

He then dispatched couriers to carry the news of his victory to Spain and Britain. Two officers were sent to Gaul and Germany, Julius Calænus, and Eduan, and Albinus Montanus, a native of Treves, who, having fought for Vitellius at Cremona, could speak knowingly and feelingly of the bad state of that emperor's affairs. At the same time he set a strong guard over all the passes of the Alps, that no succours might come from Germany to assist the conquered party.

Primus

Primus undoubtedly deserved success by his A.R. 820.
courage, activity, and other great qualifica- A. C. 69.
tions : but, at the same time, he was indebted Vitellius's
for a part of it to Vitellius's stupidity ; for he, stupid in-
after having sent first Cæcina and then Valens, dolence.
studied * nothing himself but how to bury the
alarms of war in pleasure and luxury. He
had no thoughts of providing ammunitions or
arsenals, nor of encouraging or exercising the
troops that remained with him : he did not
even appear, but hiding himself in his groves
and gardens, like a beast fattened in a corner,
which, provided it has but food, remains mo-
tionless under its cover, so lived he, void of
care : the past, the present, and what was to
come, gave him no concern if he had but vic-
tuals and drink. Whilst he was indulging him-
self in this beastly sluggishness in the park
of Aricia, he learnt the defection of Bassus
with the Ravenna fleet. This first blow, by
which Vitellius began to be roused from his
lethargy, was soon followed by a second, the
news of Cæcina's treason, which could not but
have alarmed him greatly, if the same messen-
ger had not likewise brought him intelligence
that that traitor was arrested and secured.
There was in this last event, a mixture of good
and bad, of uneasiness and joy : and Vitellius's
views † were so narrow, his soul so sluggish,
that

* *Curis luxum obtendebat. Non parare arma, non al-
loquio exercitioque militem firmare, non in ore vulgi
agere : sed umbraculis hortorum abditus, ut ignava ani-
malia, quibus si cibum suggeras, jacent torpentque, præ-
terita, instantia, futura pari oblivione dimiserat. Tac.*

† *Plus apud socordem animum lætitia quam cura va-
luit. Tac.*

A. R. 820. that joy was the prevailing sensation which he
 A. C. 69. felt. He returned to Rome triumphant; and
 in a numerous assembly, convened by his order,
 heaped praises on the fidelity of the soldiers,
 broke one of the two prætorian perfects,
 P. Sabinus, a creature of Cæcina's, ordered
 him to be put in irons, and appointed Alphæ-
 nus Varus to succeed him.

Flattery of
 the sena-
 tors.

From thence he repaired to the senate, which
 he harangued in a most pompous stile. The
 senators answered him with far-fetched flatter-
 ies; and Vitellius, on the brink of ruin, was
 still pleased with them. The emperor's brother
 was for punishing Cæcina most severely; and
 his example was a rule to others, who, ex-
 pressing their indignation in the strongest
 terms they could imagine, set forth all the enor-
 mity of the crime of a consul who betrayed
 the republic; of a general who turned traitor
 to his emperor; and of a friend ungrateful to-
 wards his prince, after receiving the greatest
 favours from him. Thus * they seemed con-
 cerned for Vitellius, whilst the real motive of
 their grief was widely different, and they la-
 mented in their hearts the unhappy fate of the
 republic, subjected to so shameful a joke, and
 become the sport of the prince's and his mi-
 nister's vices. Not one uttered the least dis-
 obliging word against the generals of the ad-
 verse party: they said the armies were impru-
 dent and in the wrong, but never dared to men-
 tion Vespasian's name.

Cæcina's

* Velut pro Vitellio conquerentes; dolorem suum pro-
 ferebant. Nulla in oratione cujusquam erga Flavianos
 duces obtreectatio. Errorem imprudentiamque exerci-
 tum culpantes, Vespasiani nomen suspensi & vitabundi
 circumibant. Tac.

Cæcina's consulship was within a day of ex-^{A. R. 820.}piring when this meeting was held ; and yet ^{A. C. 69.}there was a senator who begged as a great fa-^{▲ consul}your to be consul that one day. His request was granted, not without affording an ample field for laughter at his expence, and the expence of him who granted such a favour. Roscius Regulus took possession of the consulship the thirty-first of October, and abdicated it the same day. A consul for a single day had been already seen under the dictator Cæsar : but what in this case was without example, was, to appoint a successor to a living man, whose post was not vacated either by a decree of the senate or order of the people. Vitellius, and those who managed him, had not sense enough to take notice of such a want of formality.

The death of Junius Blæsus, which happen-^{Vitellius}ed at this time, made a great noise, and is a ^{causes Ju-}convincing proof that Vitellius, as much as he ^{nus Blæ-}deserved to be hated and despised, merited still ^{sius to be}more by his cruelty and perfidiusness, than by ^{poisoned.}his gluttony and imbecility, the unhappy fate ^{Tac. Hist.}that awaited him. We have seen how Junius ^{III. 38.}Blæsus was one of the first that declared for Vitellius, and with what magnificence he received him at Lyons : but that the emperor's groveling soul even then requitted his services with hatred and jealousy. The occasion ^{I am}about to mention revived and encreased that hatred.

Vitellius, being very ill, perceived in his neighbourhood a tower greatly illuminated during the night. He asked what it was, and was answered, that Cæcina Tuscus gave a great ^{entertainment}

A. R. 820. entertainment to several persons of distinction,
 A. C. 69. the most eminent of whom was Blæsus. The courtiers, as usual, took care to give it a malignant turn, exalting the splendour of the feast, and the gaiety of the guests; adding, that he who gave the entertainment, as well as those who were at it, but especially Blæsus, chose a very improper time for merriment, whilst their prince was ill. That crew of wretches, who infect every court, and carefully watch their masters good and bad humours, seeing Vitellius * exasperated, judged that a proper opportunity to ruin Blæsus: and L. Vitellius, whose own vices would not suffer him to bear virtue and reputation in others, undertook the odious part of informer and accuser.

He entered the room, holding the emperor's son in his arms, and, falling on his knees, remained some time motionless and silent. Vitellius asking him the cause of his grief and terror, "It is not (answered he) for myself that I fear: my brother's danger, and that of his family, is what alarms me. In vain do we dread Vespasian: the valour of the German legions, the fidelity of our provinces, the immense space of seas and land that part us, are sufficient to secure us against him. But we have, in the very heart of the city, an enemy, who reckons the Junii and Antonii † among his ancestors, and to
 " the

* Ubi adspersum Vitellium, & posse Blæsum perverti, satis patuit iis qui Principum offensas acrius speculantur, datæ L. Vitellio delationis partes. Ille insensus Blæso, æmulatione, prava, quod eum omni dedecore maculosum egregia fama anteibat, cubiculum Imperatoris reserat. Tac.

† I am at a loss to tell how Blæsus could pretend to be related to the Antonian family.

" the splendour he pretends to derive from an ^{A.R. 820.}
 " imperial origin, adds such popularity and ^{A.C. 69.}
 " magnificence, as are capable of corrupting
 " the soldiers. The eyes * of all are fixed
 " on him ; whilst, making no distinction be-
 " tween your friends and enemies, you en-
 " courage the ambition of a rival who feasts
 " and riots as if he rejoiced in his prince's
 " illness. Reward him for that ill-timed joy
 " with a just return of tears and sorrow :
 " make this night, that now shines with his
 " illuminations, a night of woe and anguish to
 " him. Let him know that Vitellius lives,
 " and that if the gods should take him from
 " us, he has a son, the support of his family."

Vitellius was terrified, and considered only
 how it were best to execute his vengeance :
 fearing the public hatred, if he openly ordered
 Blæsus's death, he preferred the cowardly
 means of poison. He even resolved to enjoy
 the pleasure of his crime, by going to visit the
 man who lay expiring with a fatal dose, given
 by his order, and was heard to congratulate
 himself, on having feasted his eyes with his
 enemy's death.

This crime appeared the more atrocious, as
 Blæsus, besides his high birth and irreproachable
 conduct, had always been inviolably attached
 to Vitellius. When Cæcina first formed his
 plan of treason, and several other leading men
 began,

* Versas illuc omnium mentes, dum Vitellius amicorum
 inimicorumque negligens, fovet ænulum, Principis la-
 bores e convivio prospectantem. Reddendam pro intem-
 pestiva lætitia moestum ac funebrem noctem, qua sciat &
 sentiat vivere Vitellium, & imperare, & filium habere.
Tac.

A.R. 320. began, like him, to be disgusted, Blæsus was A. C. 69. sounded, but firmly rejected all their proposals. He was a man of * unspotted character, fond of peace, happy and content with his own fortune, and so far from wishing to be emperor, that many were inclined to think he deserved the throne for that very reason.

Valen's
slowness,
and disso-
lute con-
duct. He
misses an
opportuni-
ty to join
the army.

Valens set out from Rome, as I have said, in order to join the army ; but this march was slow, and suitable to the train he carried with him, of women and eunuchs, more like a Persian satrap, than a Roman general. Bassus's defection, and the revolt of the Ravenna fleet, ought to have hastened him on ; and if he had been in the least active, or known how to come to a resolution at once, he might have prevented Cæcina's last treasonable step, or at least have joined the army before the battle of Cremona. By his irresolution †, he lost in deliberating, the time he thought to have employed in acting. He listened to the various counsels of those that were about him, some of whom advised his taking a few chosen horse, and getting to Ostiglia or Cremona by private roads ; whilst others thought he had best send for the prætorian cohorts, with which he would be able to force the passes blocked up by the enemy.

Extremes are often best in nice and critical cases. He ‡ took a medium : and whilst he
ought

* Sanctus, inturbidus, nullius repentini honoris, adeo non principatus appetens, ut parum effugeret ne dignus crederetur. Tac.

† Ipse inutili cunctatione, agendi tempora consultando consumpsit. Tac.

‡ Utrumque consilium aspernatus, quod inter accipitia deterrimum est, dum media sequitur, nec ausus est satis, nec providit. Tac.

ought either to have ventured all, or have acted A.R. 320. with the most consummate prudence and cau- A. C. 69. tion, only wrote to Vitellius for a reinforcement, which was sent him, consisting of three cohorts, and a regiment of horse, too numerous a body to pass unheeded by those who guarded the passes, and too weak to surmount obstacles; His leisure hours, till he received those succours, were employed in the most criminal debaucheries. The wives and daughters of those who received and entertained him were not spared, but * money, and even violence, which ever best suited his turn, were made use of. He seemed, like a man drove to despair, determined at any rate to enjoy what little sunshine of fortune he had left.

The small body of troops he expected were of no service to him when they came, for he soon perceived their attachment and fidelity to Vitellius was far from sincere. Their general's presence † was the only thing that prevented their going over to the enemy: and Valens was very sensible how weak a tie that must be on soldiers more afraid of danger than of infamy. He sent them to Remini; whilst himself, returning to his scheme of concealing his march from the enemy, took with him only a few of those whose fidelity he thought he could most rely on, went towards Umbria, and from thence to Tuscany, where he learned the

* *Aderant vis & pecunia & ruentis fortunæ novissima libido.* Tac.

† *Pudor & præsentis ducis reverentia morabatur, haud diuturna vincula apud pavidos * periculorum, & dedecoris securos.* Tac.

* The text of Tacitus says *avidos*. I follow a conjecture authorised by two learned men, and founded on sense and reason.

A. R. 820. the defeat of the German Legions and the loss
A. C. 69. of Cremona.

Valens's
bold de-
sign. He
is taken
prisoner.

He then formed a resolution, which shewed he had courage, and might have been attended with great and terrible consequences, if fortune had but favoured him. He went to Pisa, and there embarked on board the first ships he could find, with a design to land in some part of the Narbonnese, from thence to go through all Gaul, collect together the troops that were there, join them to those of Germany, and by that means form an army with which he would be enabled to begin a new war. The winds, either contrary or falling short, forced him to put into Monaco. He was well received there by Marius Maturus, intendant of the Maritime Alps, and a friend to Vitellius: but learned from him, that Valerius Paulinus, intendant of the Narbonnese, formerly a tribune in the prætorian cohorts, a brave warrior and faithful friend to Vespasian, had prevailed on the nations round him to take the oaths to that emperor. That being master of the town of Frejus, where he was born, the coasts were strictly guarded by his orders. That he had ships and troops at his command; and, besides what soldiers he had got together, was furnished by the country with men who served him zealously. Valens, greatly embarrassed, and knowing better whom to fear, than whom to trust, put out to sea again. A storm drove him on the Stæchadæ * Islands, dependant on Marseilles, to which Paulinus sent some gallies who took him prisoner.

* The is-
lands Hie-
res.

By his retreat from Italy, Rimini was given up to Cornelius Fuscus, the new commander
of

of the Ravenna fleet, who, after that made himself master of Picenum, and the low lands of Umbria; by which means all Italy was divided between Vespasian and Vitellius, by the Apennine mountains. The taking of Valens was a signal to all the western provinces to submit to the conqueror. In Spain, the first legion, which still revered the memory of Otho, and detested Vitellius, set the sixth and tenth the example, and all declared for Vespasian. The Gauls did the same. In Britain the second legion, which had been commanded by Vespasian under Claudius's reign, was well acquainted with his bravery and skill in war, and acknowledged him emperor with great joy. The others did not submit quite so readily, because many of their officers had been promoted by Vitellius; but at last they followed the general torrent.

All this success was the fruit of Primus's victory, though he was so unfortunate as to lose the whole merit of his exploits, by the inconsistency of his conduct. Looking on the war as finished since the battle of Cremona, he laid himself no longer under any constraint, and prosperity awaked in him all the vices, danger had forced him to lay aside for a time, his covetousness, pride, and immoderate ambition: he strove to make the legions love him, as if they had been his own: self-love, and a strong desire to rule, were visible in all his speeches and actions. The better to pay his court to the legions, he permitted them to chuse their own centurions in the room of those who had been killed in the war, and they did not fail to pitch upon the most turbulent men in the army.

A.R. 820.
A. C. 69.
Vespasian
is acknow-
ledged by
a great
part of Ita-
ly, and all
the wes-
tern pro-
vinces.

Inconsis-
tency of
Primus's
conduct,
after the
battle of
Cremona.
Tac. Hist.
III. 49.

A.R. 820. army. All discipline was spoilt; the soldiers
A. C. 69. were no longer governed by their officers, but the officers forced to give way to the licentiousness of the soldiers. Primus's thoughts were wholly taken up with the means of executing his ambitious schemes, and enriching himself by plunder and rapine: he did not even attempt to conceal the excesses he was guilty of, nor seemed in the least disturbed at the apprehension of Mucian's speedy arrival, whom it was much more dangerous to offend, than to disobey Vespasian himself.

He advances towards Rome. He did not however neglect the cares of war; and winter drawing on, he left the plains near the Po, which began to grow wet and boggy, and marched towards Rome, but not with his whole army. He took with him only detachments of the victorious legions, leaving the standards, eagles, and most of the soldiers at Verona. He likewise carried with him the auxiliary cohorts and cavalry, and was joined on the road by the eleventh legion, which had embraced Vespasian's party from the very first, though feebly, having till then remained in Dalmatia waiting the event, and repining at having had no share in the success. The commander in chief of that legion, and of six thousand Dalmatians lately raised, who were with it, was Poppæus Silvanus, an ancient consul, and governor of Dalmatia, as I have before said: but the real power of command was exercised by Annius Bassus, colonel of the legion: for Silvanus* was an old man, who had

* Is Silvanum, socordem bello, & dies rerum, verbis terentem, specie obsequii regebat, ad omniaque quæ agenda forent quæta cum industria aderat. *Tac.*

had neither vigour nor capacity for war, an A.R. 820: eternal prater, who lost in talking the time he A. C. 69. should have employed in acting; and Annius keeping in appearance within all the bounds of a subaltern officer, governed him nevertheless, and directed every operation with a quiet and modest activity. Besides those troops, Primus strengthened his army, by incorporating into his legions the flower of the Ravenna fleet, whom he replaced out of Silvanus's Dalmatians.

Arriving with all these forces at Fano in Picenum, he halted there, to hold a council. He learned that the prætorian cohorts were set out from Rome, and it was not doubted but that the passes of the Apennine mountains were guarded. Besides, the situation of the victorious army was such as could not of itself but give uneasiness. The country it was in had been ruined and laid waste by the war: the soldiers, apt to be most insolent when the distress is greatest, demanded a * gratification it was impossible to give them. No stock had been provided either of money or provisions: and their inconsiderate greediness hurt themselves, by destroying and dissipating in plunder, what, if raised by moderate contributions, would have been a resource in times of general need.

So great was the contempt for the most sacred laws in this army, that one of the soldiers declared he had killed his own brother in the late battle, and demanded a reward for it. The officers were puzzled. To reward so abominable

A soldier demands a reward for killing his brother.

* Tacitus calls this gratification *Clavarium*. It related to the soldiers' shoes and the nails they were trimmed with.

A.R. 820. nable a murder, would have been a manifest
 A. C. 69. violation of the law of nature ; but by the law of war he was not punishable for it. The soldier who presented that petition was put off to another time, under pretence that it was not possible just then to pay him according to his merit. Tacitus mentions, on this occasion, an affair of the same nature, of a brother killed by a brother in the battle fought at the gates of Rome, between Pompeius Strabo and Cinna. But then he observes a very material difference, which is, that the murderer, out of remorse and grief, afterwards killed himself : “ So much * (adds he) did our ancestors “ excel us, both in love of virtue and abhor-
 “ rence of guilt.”

Tac. Hist.
 vii. 52.

The result of the council held by Primus was, that a detachment of horse should be sent to scour the country, reconnoitre all Umbria, and discover where the Apennine mountains were most accessible : that all the troops left at Verona should be sent for, and proper orders given for convoys to come by the Po or sea.

Quarrels
 between
 Primus
 and Mu-
 cian.

These measures were very prudent and well-judged ; but the execution of them was obstructed by several of the chief officers, who grew jealous of Primus's too great power, and thought they could build their hopes of fortune more securely on Mucian, whose interest it was to protract matters. That general was piqued at Primus's sudden victory, and was vexed to see that if he was not on the spot, at least to usher Vespasian's arms into the capital, the
 war

* Tanto acrior apud majores, sicut virtutibus gloria, ita flagitiis poenitentia fuit Tac.

war would be ended without his having any A.R. 820.
share in it. For that reason, he wrote plainly A. C. 69.
to his friends, desiring them to spin things out
till his arrival : to others he wrote less openly,
sometimes exhorting them to finish quickly a
work so well begun, and at other times de-
siring them not to be over hasty, but to pro-
ceed with prudence and caution : by that means
reserving in his own power, either to blame
others for the bad success, or assume to him-
self the merit of the good, according as the
event should prove. Mucian's friends in the
army answered him in a manner agreeable to
his views, and gave a bad turn to Primus and
Varus's haste ; and these letters being sent to
Vespasian, prejudiced him against Primus, and
made him not set so great a value on his ser-
vices, as the latter expected he should.

His pride was hurt. He imputed it to Mu-
cian, whom he railed against most bitterly ;
and even wrote to Vespasian in a more haughty
style, than became a subject speaking to his
sovereign, boasting his own exploits, and giv-
ing Vespasian to understand he owed the em-
pire to him. Then glancing at Mucian, " I
" serve my prince, said he, not by writing let-
" ters, and sending couriers, but with my
" sword. I do not mean to lessen the glory of
" those who maintained peace and quiet in
" Asia ; but only observe that Italy was the
" object of my care, and the theatre of my
" services. I made the powerful provinces of
" Spain and Gaul acknowledge you for em-
" peror. In vain have I run so many hazards,
" and borne so much fatigue, if the reward is
" to be given to those who have not even seen
VOL. V. U " the

A. R. 920. "the enemy." He * at whom these reproaches, A. C. 69. intermixed with insults, were aimed, was not ignorant of them. From thence arose an implacable hatred between Primus and Mucian: the one shewed it openly like a soldier, whilst the other disguised it like a courtier, and never could forgive. Primus did not serve Vespasian with the less zeal. He completed his work, indeed without much difficulty, because the enemy he had to deal with sought his own ruin.

Vitellius
endeavours
to stifle the
news of
the battle of
Cremona.
Extraordi-
nary reso-
lution of a
centurion.

When Vitellius † learned the defeat of his legions at Cremona, his greatest care was how to stifle and suppress the news of his disaster: a vain and wretched dissimulation, which, without lessening the evil, retarded the remedy: for, had he owned the truth, and advised with his friends he still had resources left; whereas by giving out that all went well, he gave the evil time to increase. None about him ventured to say a word of the war, and spies and soldiers spread up and down the city, prevented others from talking of it, though in fact it only made them say the more in private. Had people been allowed to speak, they would have spoke the truth only; but being ordered to hold

* Neque fefellere ea Mucianum. Inde graves similitates, quas Antonius simplicius, Mucianus callide, eoque implacabilis nutriebat. *Tac.*

† At Vitellius, fractis apud Cremonam rebus, nuncios cladis occultans stulta dissimulatione, remedia potius malorum quam mala differebat. Quippe contenti consultantique; supererant spes viresque: quam e contrario læta omnia fingeret, falsis ingravescebat. Mirum apud ipsum de bello silentium: prohibiti per urbem sermones, eoque plures: ac si liceret, vera narraturi, quia vetabantur atrociora vulgaverant. *Tac.*

hold their tongues, they were induced to think, A. R. 820:
and say much more than really was. A. C. 69:

The generals on the other side endeavoured to enhance the opinion of their advantages, by the confidence they expressed on all occasions. Whenever they took any of Vitellius's scouts, they led them round the camp, shewed them what forces they had, and then sent them back to their master, who, after questioning them in private, put them all to death.

Vitellius was so blind, that he would not believe what he wished might not be true. A centurion, called Julius Agrestis, undertook to break this kind of enchantment: and after exhorting Vitellius several times to take a vigorous resolution, begged leave to go himself to reconnoitre the enemy, and see with his own eyes what had passed at Cremona. He did not attempt to deceive Primus by getting intelligence privately, but went at once to him, told him the orders his emperor had charged him with, and with what intention he came. Primus ordered some of his men to shew him the field of battle, the ruins of Cremona, and the legions which had submitted to the conqueror's mercy. Agrestis returned to Vitellius, who still refused to credit his report, and accused him of being bribed by the enemy. " Well, * said that brave officer, since you
" will have a stronger and more convincing
" proof, and that neither my life nor death
" can be of any farther service to you, I will
" give you such a one, as shall get the better
2 " of

* Quandoquidem magno documento opus est, nec alius jam tibi aut vitæ aut mortis mee usus, dabo cui credas. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. " of your incredulity ;" and so saying, killed himself. Accordingly to another account of this affair, agreeing with this in every other circumstance, it was Vitellius that ordered him to be killed.

He sends troops to secure the passes of the Apennine mountains.

* *Bevagna.*

Remaining in Rome, he is taken up with other thoughts than war.

At length, Vitellius, as if waking from a deep sleep, sent the two prætorian prefects, Julius Priscus and Alphænus Varus, with fourteen prætorian cohorts, and all the auxiliary horse, to secure the passes of the Apennine mountains. This body, already numerous, was soon after encreased by a legion of marines. Such an army, formidable by its number, and the goodness of its troops, would have been able, under a proper general, to have acted even offensively. These troops took their post at Mævania * in Umbria, whilst Vitellius remained at Rome, busying himself with very different cares. Without † lessening his usual prodigality and luxury, he took measures for the future, because he was sensible the present was not his. He named the magistrates for ten years to come, and declared himself perpetual consul. Still greedy after money, and imagining it would please the people, he granted foreigners the privileges the Latins had enjoyed in the time of the old republic ; renewed treaties with allies on more advantageous terms ; and was lavish of immunities and exemptions from tributes : in short, without minding what might be the consequence, he dissipated all the rights and patrimony of the empire. The ‡ vulgar admired his magnificence

† Nihil a solito luxu remittens, & diffidentia properus.
Tac.

‡ *Vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat : stultissimus*

cence and generosity, and some were mad enough to purchase from him : wiser men looked upon such concession, which could not subsist without the ruin of the state, as idle, and of no value. A.R. 820.
A. C. 69.

The army at Mævania desired strongly to be favoured with the emperor's presence. He went, attended with a crowd of senators, some of whom he took with him to form his train, but the greater number because he distrusted and feared them. The same irresolution that followed him elsewhere, went with him to the camp, and fitted him to be the dupe of perfidious counsels. A prodigious flight of crows that hovered over him whilst he harangued the soldiers, and the resistance of a victim that fled from the altar, and was not killed till at some distance from the place where it was to be offered up, were looked upon as very bad omens. But * the worst omen of all, was Vitellius himself, who had no idea of war, was always dubious and at a loss, betraying his ignorance by repeated idle questions, about the order to be observed by an army on a march, the measures to be taken to reconnoitre an enemy, and the methods to be used to hasten or prolong a war, trembling at ever news that came, and discovering his fear by his pale looks and tottering steps, and then getting drunk to drown thought, He goes to
his camp,
but soon
returns to
Rome.

He

tissimus quisque pecunia mercabatur. Apud sapientes cassa habebantur, quæ neque dari, neque accipi salva Republica poterant. *Tac.*

* Sed præcipuum ipse Vitellius ostentum erat, ignarus militiæ, improvidus consilii, quis ordo agminis, quæ cura explorandi, quantus urgendo trahendove bello modus, alios rogitans, & ad omnes nuncios vultu quoque & incessu trepidus, dein temulentus. *Tac.*

A.R. 820. He soon grew tired of the camp, and being
A. C. 69. informed of the defection of the Misænum fleet, returned to Rome in great consternation : for his soul received a new impression of terror * at each misfortune that befel him, whilst the general danger of his situation seemed not to affect him at all. If he had had the least judgment or understanding, it was plain he ought to have passed the Apennine mountains with his fresh troops, and attacked the enemy, worn out with the fatigues of a hard campaign, and greatly distressed for want of provisions. Instead of that, he lost time, divided † his army into small detachments, and by that means delivered up to be butchered, brave men, obstinately resolved to stand by him to the last. The best and most experienced of the centurions disapproved of that step, and would have said so had they been asked their opinions. Those whom Vitellius most confided in kept them at a distance : but the prince was most to blame in rejecting every good advice that was offered, and listening to none but those who, whilst they strove to please, were in fact undoing him.

Every thing about him melted away. The Misænum fleet, as I have said, had just betrayed him, and drew with it the greatest part of Campania. The author of that defection was a centurion,

The Misænum fleet declares for Vespasian. Tac. Hist. l. 57.

* Recentissimum quodque vulnus pavens, summi discriminis incuriosus. Tac.

† Dum dispergit vires acerrimum militem, & usque in extrema obstinatum, trucidandum capiendumq; tradidit : peritissimis Centurionum dissentientibus, & si consulerentur, vera dicturis. Arcuere eos intimi amicorum Vitellii, ita formati Principis auribus, ut aspera quæ utilia, nec quidquam nisi jucundum & læsurum acciperet. Tac.

centurion, ignominiously broke by Galba: A.R. 820, so capable * is the audaciousness of a single A. C. 69. man to produce the greatest and most unexpected revolutions in civil wars. That traitor, whose name was Claudius Faventinus, forged letters in Vespasian's name, promising great rewards to all such as should espouse his cause; and by that means gained over the soldiers, who met with no obstruction from their commander Claudius Apollinaris, for † he himself wavered, but wanted vigour and resolution to back his treasonable inclinations. Apinius Tiro, an ancient prætor, who happened by mere accident to be at Minturni, fortified that place, and took upon him the command of it. They acted in concert, and after having made the fleet declare, applied to the several towns of Campania, who made no difficulty to follow their example; unless it be, that the zeal the inhabitants of Puzzola expressed for Vespasian, made Capua espouse the contrary party, in consequence of the rivalry between those two towns, which shewed itself ‡ even when so important a point was at stake.

Vitellius hearing what had past, sent Claudius Julianus, who had lately had the command of the Misænum fleet, and was greatly beloved by the soldiers, to try to bring them back to their duty. Julianus had with him one of the city cohorts, and a troop of gladiators; a new reinforcement for their adversaries, who found no difficulty in bringing over

* *Tantum civilibus discordiis etiam singulorum audacia valet. Tac.*

† *Neque fidei constans, neque strenuus in perfidia.*

‡ *Municipalem æmulationem bellis civilibus miscebant. Tac.*

A.R. 820. over to them both the commander and his
 A. C. 69. men. They all took up their quarters in Terracina, a town strong by its situation, well judging, that so near Rome they would soon be attacked. In effect, Vitellius dividing the army he had in Umbria, left the greatest part of it at Narnia * with the two prætorian prefects; and detached six cohorts and five hundred horse, who marched towards Terracina, under the command of L. Vitellius the emperor's brother.

Terracina taken possession of by the soldiers of the fleet, and their associates.
 * Narni.

Momentary zeal of the city of Rome in favour of Vitellius.

Vitellius began to be sensible of the danger he was in, when he found himself, as it were, enclosed between Primus's victorious army in Umbria on one side, and the new rebels of Campania on the other. His hopes were however elated for a few moments by a vain and frivolous resource. The people of Rome were for taking arms, and the prince's freemen advised him to take advantage of that favourable disposition. He consulted them only; for all his friends, and especially those whom he had most promoted, had forsaken him. Vitellius following their advice, cited the tribes to repair to him; and promised, that after the victory he would dismiss such as should enlist, and grant them the rewards and privileges of veterans. The multitude of those that offered themselves was so great, that he ordered the consuls to finish the levying of those troops, the silly emperor trusted to that weak prop, calling a despicable mob *, brave in talk only, his army and his legions.

The

* *Vulgus ignavum, & nihil ultra verba ausurum, falsa specie, exercitum & legiones appellat. Tac.*

The whole city stirred in favour of Vitellius, A.R. 820. moved by one of those sudden starts which easily communicate from one to the other, and as readily subside, being seldom directed by reason. The Roman knights, with a numerous body of the freemen, offered their money and personal service. The senators agreed to tax themselves at certain sums, and to furnish a number of slaves for soldiers. Fear * began, and pity coming in to its aid, inspired them with favourable sentiments. Vitellius's person was less the object of it, than their concern to see the supreme rank so degraded, and reduced to such humiliation. Vitellius's speeches, his actions, tears, and great promises, the usual effects of fear, likewise moved them. Then it was that he first took the name of Cæsar, which he had always refused before; but he was in a situation, in which men are apt to lay as great a stress on vulgar ideas, as on the wisest councils; and he superstitiously hoped that name, always thought fortunate, would be a safeguard and protection to him.

This gust of good fortune, which seemed to flatter Vitellius, lasted but a moment. An ardour † void of motive goes out as soon as kindled.

* *Ea simulatio officii* *, a metu profecta, verterat in favorem. Et plerique haud perinde Vitellium, quam casum, locumque principatus miserabantur. Nec deerat ipse, vultu, voce, lacrymis, misericordiam elicere, largus promissis, & quæ natura trepidantium est, immodicus. Quia & Cæsarem se dici voluit, aspernatus antea: sed tunc, superstitione nominis, & quia in metu consilia prudentium & vulgi rumor juxta audiuntur. *Tac.*

† *Omnia inconsulti impetus cæpta, initiis valida, spatio languescunt.* *Tac.*

* *I have made a small correction in the text, after Heinsius and Ryckius, which to me appears necessary. Most of the editions have officia metu profecta.*

A.R. 820, kindled. All began to withdraw: the senators and knights excused themselves from performing their promises, first, by avoiding the Emperor's presence, but afterwards openly; so that Vitellius, not having power to force them, ceased to ask what they would not grant.

The cohorts opposed against Primus are forced to submit. *Tac. Hist. iii. 68.*

At the same time the strongest body of troops that still remained faithful, was forced to abandon him, and leave Primus a free passage to Rome. Italy thought the war was going to be renewed, when Vitellius's prætorian cohorts took possession of Mævania, and made it their place of arms. But that cowardly emperor's hasty retreat, made every one sensible there was no danger of farther battles, and determined several nations in favour of his rival. The Sarnpites, Pelignians, and Marsi, declared for Vespasian, and vying in emulation with Campania, brought * with them all the zeal and ardour of men newly engaged.

Primus's legions passed the Apennine mountains without meeting any other obstacle than the snow, bad weather, and difficulty of the roads. This was in the month of December; and the incredible fatigues they suffered only in crossing the mountains, prove how doubtful success would have been had the enemy opposed them at the same time.

There they met with Petilius Cærealis, who had made his escape from the guards Vitellius had set over him, disguised like a peasant; and he was well acquainted with the country. Cærealis was very nearly related to Vespasian, and
a good

* Ut in novo obsequio, ad cuncta belli munia æreæ erant. *Tac.*

a good warrior, having served with distinction A.R. 820, in Britain. He was therefore ranked among A. C. 69. the commanding officers.

Many were of opinion, that Flavius Sabinus and Domitian, the one brother, and the other son to Vespasian, who were then in Rome, might likewise have made their escape. Primus offered them the means, sending them instructions what road to take, and where to go to be in safety. Sabinus being old and infirm, was afraid of the fatigue of flight. Domitian was very willing to go, but was too closely watched; and though his guards seemed disposed to assist him, he would not trust them, fearing their offers were only meant as snares. Nor had Vitellius any bad design against either Sabinus or Domitian, but spared his adversary's family, in order to save his own.

Primus having passed the Apennine mountains, marched to Carsulum *, where he resolved to halt to rest his troops, and wait the coming up of the legion sent far from Verona, of which he had only detachments with him. The place where he was, was very proper for an encampment, being a high ground which overlooked a great extent of land, and could be well supplied with provisions from several rich neighbouring towns. Besides that, Vitellius's troops being but ten miles off at Narnia, Primus was in hopes of having a conference with them, and of being able to bring them over without fighting.

Primus's soldiers preferring victory to peace, were not over fond of that state of inaction :

nor

* This town, long since destroyed, was situated between Todi and Spoleta.

A.R. 820. nor were they much pleased with waiting for
 A.C. 69. the legions, who they thought were coming to share the booty, rather than their danger. Primus having assembled them, represented, "That Vitellius still had forces able to resist, "if they remained faithful to him, and even to "become formidable if drove to despair. That "in all beginnings of civil wars much must "be trusted to fortune, but that victory was "to be completed by wise councils and mature deliberation. That the Misenum fleet, "and the fine country of Campania, had "abandoned Vitellius, and all he had remaining out of the empire of the world, was the "district between Terracina and Narnia. You "have gained sufficient glory, added he, by "the battle of Cremona, and the taking of "that town has brought too much hatred upon you. Your design ought to be, not to "take Rome, but to save it. You will have a "right to expect the greatest rewards and infinite honour, if you deliver the senate and "Roman people from a shameful bondage, "without shedding the blood of your fellow "citizens." These remonstrances took effect and pacified the soldiers, and the legions they expected arrived soon after.

The news of the encrease of Primus's forces, struck a terror on the adverse cohorts, whose fidelity began to waver. None exhorted them to continue the war, but many of their officers advised them to change sides, hoping to make a merit of it with the conqueror, and expecting to be the more esteemed, if each carried over the troop under his command. They kept up a correspondence with Primus, and gave him

him intelligence, that he might easily make A.R. 820. himself master of a body of four hundred horse A. C. 69: then in Interamna *. Arrius Varus was im-^{mediately} dispatched with a detachment of chosen troops to attack them. But few resisted, and they were killed; most of the others laying down their arms, submitted; whilst some fled to their camp, where they encreased the alarm, by exaggerating the enemy's strength and valour, to lessen their own shame. Thus were all things disposed for a general defection. Cowardice was not punished: desertion did not fail to be rewarded: the only emulation among the officers was, who should be most perfidious: tribunes and centurions were continually passing over to the enemy: the common soldiers still held out obstinately, till the two prætorian prefects, Priscus and Alphænus, leaving the camp also and going to Vitellius, set an example every man thought he might follow without shame, and like them abandon a desponding party.

The soldiers, however, still flattered themselves with a chimerical hope. Uninformed of the fate of Valens, or not believing it, they imagined that general had penetrated into Germany, where he would collect all the troops left on the Rhine, add others to them, and soon arrive with a formidable army. The ^{Valens is} chiefs of the adverse party put an end to those ^{killed at} hopes, by causing Valens to be killed at Ur- ^{Urbino, by} bino, to which place he had been brought pri- ^{order of} soner; and shewed his head, that none might ^{the con-} doubt what was become of him. Valen's re- ^{querora,} putation was so great, that both parties looked upon the war as at an end by his death.

He

A.R. 820. He * was born at Agnania, of an equestrian A. C. 69. family. He was a man of pleasure, and had that turn of mind which forms what is generally called an agreeable companion. He appeared on the stage at the juvenile games in Nero's time, being at first forced to it, but afterwards took a pleasure he did not attempt to conceal in that ignoble exercise, in which he succeeded better than became a man of his rank. When commander of a legion in Germany he wanted to place Virginus on the throne, and afterwards became his accuser. He killed Fonteius Capito, either after he had corrupted his fidelity, or because he could not corrupt it. A traitor to Galba, and faithful to Vitellius, he owed most of his reputation to the perfidy of others.

Vitellius's unfortunate troops, forsaken and deprived of all hopes, resolved to submit to the conqueror. It was a very humiliating ceremony for those brave men, to march out of Narnia with their colours and ensigns, and yield themselves up to the discretion of the enemy, who waited for them in the plain, drawn up in battle array. Primus's troops surrounded them, whilst he spoke to them with mildness, and ordered part back to Narnia, and part to Interamna, leaving with them sufficient

* Natus erat Valens Agnaniæ, equestri familia, procax moribus, neque absurdus ingenio famam urbanitatis, per lasciviam petere. Ludicro Juvenalium sub Nerone, velut ex necessitate, mox sponte mimos actitavit, scite magis quam probe. Legatus legionis, & fovit Virginium, & infamavit. Fonteium Capitonem in proditorem corruptum, seu quia corrumpere nequiverat, interfecit. Galbæ proditor, Vitellio fidus, & aliorum perfidia illætratus. Tac.

ficient forces to prevent their attempting a rebellion, but with orders likewise not to molest them if they behaved well. A.R. 820.
A. C. 69.

Vitellius, unable to defend himself any longer, was reduced to the necessity of chusing, either to die in arms, if he had been capable of so brave a resolution, or to negotiate with the victor, and make the best terms he could. This last is the step he would have taken if he had been his own master. His stupid * insensibility would have suffered him to forget his having been emperor, if others could likewise not have remembered it. That would have been a great advantage to Rome, which would not then have felt the calamities of war, and where Vespasian would have been acknowledged as readily, as if the empire had belonged to him by right of inheritance. The contrary happened, much against the will of all the commanders of the victorious party. Primus had declared to his soldiers, that his desire was to end the war by agreement, rather than by force of arms, and in consequence of the system made overtures to Vitellius. Mucian too, was for treating with him. But the negotiation was carried farthest by Flavius Sabinus; and would have succeeded, had it not been for the insuperable obstinacy of Vitellius's soldiers. Vitellius
disposed to
abdicate.
Tac. Hist.
III. 63.

Flavius Sabinus was, as I have already often said, elder brother to Vespasian, and præfect of Rome, by virtue of which post he had the command of the city cohorts. If he had followed the advice of the chief senators, he would have He settles
the condi-
tions with
Flavius
Sabinus.

* Tanta torpedo invaserat animum, ut si Principem eum
fuisse ceteri non meminissent, ipse oblivisceretur. Tac.

A.R. 820. have endeavoured to share the honour of the
A. C. 69. victory, by making himself master of the capital. They represented to him, how easy an enterprize it was, "That, besides the troops
" under his command, he might depend on the
" watch, the slaves of those who spoke to him,
" and above all, on the prosperous fortune of
" a party, to which all obstacles gave way.
" That Vitellius had only a few cohorts left,
" and those discouraged by a series of bad success. That the people, who then seemed
" well affected towards him, might change
" those sentiments in a moment; and that if
" he acted with vigour, and put himself at
" their head, the adulations then lavished on
" Vitellius, would soon be given to Vespasian.
" That Vitellius was in himself contemptible
" to the highest degree, incapable of bearing
" prosperity, and much less able to struggle
" against the misfortunes that overwhelmed
" him on all sides. That he ought not to
" leave all to Primus and Varus. That who-
" ever brought the city over to Vespasian's
" side, would have the merit of finishing the
" war. That it would well become him to
" take the empire as in trust for his brother;
" and Vespasian would have very just reason
" to honour him above all, and prefer him to
" every other person."

Sabinus heard them with great composure, and seeming indifference, which made some think him jealous of his brother's fortune. In effect, before Vespasian's elevation to the empire, Sabinus surpassed him in power and riches: and as no man is pleased with falling lower, some misintelligence was feared between the

two brothers, concealed under the appearance of union and friendship. It would be more charitable, and perhaps more agreeable to truth, to think that Sabinus, naturally mild and gentle, was averse to bloodshed and slaughter; and that finding an opening to induce Vitellius to make a voluntary cession of the throne, he thought pacific means the most eligible. He had several private conferences with him, and the affair was at last concluded in the temple of Apollo. Vitellius was to abdicate the empire, in consideration of a pension of a hundred * millions of sesterces: his expences for house-keeping to be defrayed, and he at liberty to spend the rest of his days on the delightful coast of Campania. Cluvius Rufus, and Silius Italicus, both of consular dignity, were witnesses and sureties to the agreement: and crowds † of distant spectators observed their looks. Meanness was pictured in Vitellius's: Sabinus was far from insulting over him, seeming rather to pity and take compassion on him.

Every thing was settled, and would have remained quiet, if those who were about Vitellius had been as tractable as himself: but they opposed the agreement, telling him how shameful, dangerous, and uncertain it would be, since it must depend on the victor's caprice. "Vespasian, said they, will never have pride enough to bear the sight of Vitellius reduced to a private station. Your conquered friends

Vain re-
monstran-
ces made by
Vitellius's
most zea-
lous par-
tizans.

" will

* Eight hundred thousand pounds.

† *Vultus procul viscentibus notabantur*: Vitellii projectus & degener, Sabinus non insultans, & miseranti propior. *Tac.*

A. R. 820: " will not be able to brook such indignity,
 A. C. 69. " and the pity they will feel for you, will ex-
 " pose you to new dangers. You have indeed
 " attained an age, at which the vicissitudes of
 " fortune may have given you a dislike to
 " grandeur, and make you wish for retire-
 " ment. But what is to become of your son
 " Germanicus? What is his fate to be? What
 " rank is he to hold in the Republic? And
 " you yourself, can you depend on that peace-
 " ful retreat that is promised you? If Vespas-
 " sian is once possess of the empire, neither
 " he, nor his friends, nor armies, will think
 " themselves safe so long as a rival family sub-
 " sists. Fabius Valens, though a prisoner, and
 " loaded with chains, gave them such um-
 " brage, that they thought it necessary to kill
 " him: nor will Primus, Varus, and Mucian,
 " the honour and support of that party, have
 " any other power with regard to Vitellius,
 " than that of prosecuting him unto death.
 " Cæsar did not spare Pompey's life, nor Au-
 " gustus Antony's. Can more elevated senti-
 " ments be expected from Vespasian, who was
 " a client of your father Vitellius, whilst
 " Vitellius was colleague with Claudius? No,
 " rather * remember your father, censor and
 " thrice consul: remember the honours your
 " family has enjoyed, and let despair inspire
 " you

* Quin, et censuram patris, ut tres Consulatus, ut tot
 egregiæ domus honores deceret, desperatione saltem ad
 audaciam accingeretur. Perstare militem: superasse studia
 populi. Denique nihil atrocius eventurum, quam in quod
 sponte ruant. Moriendum victis, moriendum deditis:
 id solum referre, novissimum spiritum per ludibrium &
 contumelias effundant, an per virtutem. Tac.

“ you with courage. The soldiers are invio-^{A. R. 820.}
 “ lably attached to you, and the people love^{A. C. 69.}
 “ you with an ardent zeal. At all events, no-
 “ thing worse can happen than what we are
 “ rushing into of our own accords. If con-
 “ quered, we die : and if we trust to the ene-
 “ my’s mercy, our fate is the same : death is
 “ inevitable every way : the only thing in our
 “ power to chuse is, whether we will die with
 “ glory, or with shame.”

Vitellius’s ears were shut to all generous
 councils. He sunk under the load of his
 misfortunes, and his uneasiness for his family
 quite overwhelmed him : he feared too obstinate
 a resistance might irritate the conqueror against
 his wife and children. He had a mother too,
 whose age and virtues were infinitely respecta-
 ble, but her opportune death preceded a few
 days the ruin of her family. She died, reap-
 ing * no other fruit from her son’s high fortune;
 but causes of grief, and a good reputation.
 According to Suetonius, many were of opinion^{Suet. Vit.}
 that lady did not die a natural death. Some^{14.}
 said, that her son refused her food during her
 illness, on account of a pretended prediction of
 a woman in the country of the Catti, promising
 him a long and happy reign if he survived his
 mother. Others say, that Sextilia herself,
 tired of life, and dreading the misfortunes that
 were falling on her family, obtained, without
 much difficulty, Vitellius’s leave to hasten her
 death by poison. The contrariety of these re-
 ports lessens their weight, and Tacitus’s silence
 strengthens our doubts. Vitellius is already

* Nihil principatum filii assecuta, nisi luctum & bonam
 famam. Tac.

A.R. 820. criminal enough without the additional guilt
A. C. 69. of parricide, either actually committed, or consented to.

Vitellius
abdicates.
The people
and soldiers
oppose it,
and force
him to re-
turn to the
palace.

Tac. Hist.
iii. 67.

On the eighteenth of December this unhappy prince, being informed of the defection of the troops at Narnia, who had been forced to swear allegiance to his enemy, went * out of the palace, cloathed in mourning, and followed by all his household, extremely afflicted and dejected. His son, a child, was carried in a small litter. Their march seemed like that of a funeral procession. The people still heaped flatteries upon him, whilst the soldiers followed in sullen menacing silence.

A man must have been void of all feeling and compassion to have beheld without concern, the melancholy fate of a Roman emperor, lately master of the whole universe, now walking through an immense crowd of his own subjects, towards the most public part of his capitol, to make a solemn abdication of his rank and power. Such a thing had never before been seen nor heard of. The dictator Cæsar, and after him Caligula, perished by a conspiracy.

* Pullo amictu Palatio degreditur mœsta circum familia. Simul ferebatur lecticula parvulus filius, velut in funebrem pompam. Voces populi blandæ & intempestivæ: miles minaci silentio. Nec quisquam adeo rerum humanarum immemor, quem non commoveret illa facies: Romanum Principem, & generis humani paulo ante dominum, relictâ fortunæ suæ sede, per populum, per urbem, exire de Imperio. Nihil tale viderant, nihil audierant. Repentina vis Dictatorem Cæsarem oppresserat, occultæ Caium insidiæ: nox & ignotum rus, fugam Neronis absconderant: Piso & Galba tamquam in acie ceciderant. In sua conscione Vitellius, inter suos milites, prospectantibus etiam feminis, paucâ & præsentî mœstitiæ congruentia locutus, &c. *Tac.*

racy. Nero's flight was hid by the darkness ^{A. R. 820.}
of the night, and few were witnesses to his ^{A. C. 69.}
death. Galba and Piso were killed, as it were
in battle. But Vitellius, in the midst of his
people, surrounded by his soldiers, and in the
sight of even the women, whose curiosity had
brought them to see so extraordinary an event,
with a sorrowful heart, renounce the empire.

He read his act of renunciation, whereby
he declared in few words and with many tears,
that, for the peace and welfare of the republic,
he resigned the supreme power; begging those
who heard him, still to remember him, and
take pity on his brother, wife, and infant chil-
dren. At the same time, taking up his son in
his arms, he presented and recommended him
to each of the great men in particular, and to
the whole people in general. His tears stifling
his speech, he took off his sword from his side,
to signify that he gave up all power of life and
death, and presented it to the consul Cæcilius
Simplex who stood next him. The consul re-
fused to take it; and the whole assembly una-
nimously cried out against it: on which Vitel-
lius retired, going towards the temple of con-
cord, to divest himself of the badges of supreme
command, and from thence proceed to his
brother's house. The cries of the people grew
louder than ever: they would not suffer him
to take up his abode in a private house, but
insisted on his returning to the palace, block-
ing up every other way, and leaving none open
but that which lead to the sacred street. Vi-
tellius disconcerted, and prevented from exe-
cuting his resolution, was forced to yield to the
the

A.R. 820. the desires of the multitude, who conducted
A.C. 69. him back to the palace.

Battle, in
which Sa-
binus was
worsted.
He retires
to the ca-
pitol.

Before the ceremony of the abdication was performed, a report was already spread, that Vitellius had renounced the empire : in consequence of which, Sabinus wrote to the tribunes of the German cohorts, desiring them to keep their troops within proper bounds. In all revolutions, every one strives to be first to worship a rising fortune. And accordingly the chief of the senators, with a great number of Roman knights, the officers and soldiers of the city cohorts, and those of the watch, hurried in crowds to pay their court to Sabinus. They were greatly surprised to learn there, that the business was not yet done ; that the people began to take fire for Vitellius, and that the angry troops began to menace and grow outrageous. They had gone too far to recede : and those who formed a court about Sabinus, concluded they could not be safe if they separated, but must become an easy prey to Vitellius's soldiers, turned their personal fears into party zeal, and exhorted the city præfect to take arms.

But *, as is generally the case on those occasions, all were forward to advise, but few ready to share the danger. Sabinus went out, but badly attended, and was soon met by a body of soldiers of the contrary party. A battle ensued, and Sabinus being worsted, was forced to take shelter in the capitol, after losing some of his men. Besides the soldiers under his command, some senators and knights shut themselves

* Sed, quod in ejusmodi rebus accidit, consilium ab omnibus datum est, periculum pauci sumpserunt. Tac.

selves up with him, whose names Tacitus says A.R. 820. he could not well tell, because numbers, after A. C. 69. Vespasian had gained a complete victory, falsely assumed the honour of having ventured their lives for him on that occasion. Some ladies too, were courageous enough to enter into that fortress just ready to be besieged. All of them accompanied their relations or husbands, one excepted, Verulana Gracilia, whose only motive was her love for war.

Vitellius's troops, courageous enough to The capitol besieged brave danger, though strangers to discipline, and taken by Vitellius's soldiers. and unable to bear fatigue, kept so loose a guard about the capitol, that Sabinus found means to bring his children thither, with his nephew Domitian. He likewise dispatched a courier with letters to the chiefs of the victorious army, acquainting them with the situation he was in, and desiring their speedy assistance. In other respects, he past the night so quietly, that he might have gone out, and taken shelter elsewhere without danger.

At break of day, before any hostilities began, he sent Cornelius Martialis, an officer of distinction to complain of the infraction of their agreement, of the slaughter committed the evening before, and the siege he was obliged to sustain in the capitol. And to shew how unjust their treatment of him was, he added in the letter which Martialis carried :

“ I took no part in the war, but kept myself
 “ within the sphere of senator, whilst the
 “ quarrel was deciding betwixt you and Vespasian, by the battles of your legions, the
 “ taking of towns, and the desolation of all
 “ Italy. Spain, Britain and Gaul revolted,
 “ whilst

A.R. 820. " whilst Vespasian's brother remained faithful
 A. C. 69. " to you, until you yourself solicited him first
 " to enter into treaty. Peace * and concord
 " are useful to the conquered, whilst they are
 " only glorious to the conquerors. If you re-
 " peat the steps you were pleased to take, it
 " is not me that you ought to attack with vio-
 " lence, after having deceived me by a breach
 " of faith; it is not Vespasian's son, scarce
 " past his infancy, that you ought to blame.
 " What will you gain by the death of an old
 " man, and a youth of fifteen? Go, meet the
 " legions, dispute your rights with them; the
 " event of the battle will determine all."

To these reproaches, Vitellius returned only excuses in answer, laying the blame on the soldiers, whose too great ardour he could not prevent: but advised Martialis to go out privately at a back-door, for fear the message he had brought should cost him his life, the soldiers being quite averse to all thoughts of peace. Thus † Vitellius, having no power either to command or forbid any thing, was no longer emperor, but all the motive and occasion of the war.

Martialis had scarce got back to the capitol, when the German cohorts began the attack. They had no officer to command them, but each soldier took orders from himself and his own fury. They had not given themselves time to bring up any of their engines for war, nor to provide the proper kind of arrows then used in

* *Pacem & concordiam victis utilia, victoribus tantum pulchra esse. Tac.*

† *Ipse neque juberdi, neque vetandi potens, non jam Imperator, sed tantum belli causa erat. Tac.*

in sieges, but with no other arms than their A.R. 820.
swords advanced on to the gates of the cita- A. C. 69.
del, amidst a shower of tiles and stones, poured
down from the tops of the portico's from each
side of the street. They set fire to the gates,
and would have forced their passage through
the gates, had not Sabinus formed a kind of
rampart of the statues, of which he had num-
bers at hand. These monuments of the glory
of the old Roman heroes, heaped one upon
another, stopped the assailants.

They did not however give over for that,
but formed their attack in two other places,
in one of which they succeeded, on the side of
Romulus's asylum*. Private persons had been * See Hist.
suffered to build there, because the peace that of the Ro-
Rome, then mistress of the universe, enjoyed, man Repub.
left no room to apprehend war, and houses lic, B. 1.
were built up to the very walls of the capitol.
Vitellius's soldiers fought from the tops of
those houses, with such advantage, as could
not possibly be resisted. Fire was made use of The tem-
under those unhappy circumstances, whether ple of Ju-
by the assailants, who wanted to force their piter
way into the capitol; or, as was more gene- burnt.
rally thought, by the besieged, who hoped by
that means to put a stop to the enemy's pro-
gress, is uncertain. The fact is, that the fire
spreading from one part to another, at last
gained the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which
was entirely consumed.

Tacitus† deplores this event, as the most
melancholy and shameful that ever happened
to

† Id facinus post conditam urbem luctuosissimum fœ-
disissimamque populo Romano accidit: nullo externo
hoste,

A. R. 820. to the Roman people. At a time, says *he*,
 A. C. 69. when no enemies were concerned, when the
 gods would have been propitious to us, if our
 crimes had not been a bar to their protection,
 the abode of Jupiter Capitolinus, deemed by
 our pious ancestors the test of the duration of
 our empire, that august edifice, whose sancti-
 ty neither Porsenna, to whom Rome surrender-
 ed, nor the Gauls who took it, had dared to
 violate, perished by the fury of our own prin-
 ces. It was burnt before in Sylla's war *, but
 that was by the treachery of some particular
 persons: now it was besieged in form, and set
 on fire openly. What was the object of our
 arms? What † could be expected to compen-
 sate so fatal a loss?

If the besieged were the authors of the con-
 flagration, they did not reap the fruits of their
 crime; for the German cohorts wanted nei-
 ther courage nor cunning when in danger;
 but on the contrary, ‡ the soldiers of the op-
 posite

*hoste, propitiis, si per mores nostros liceret, deis, sedem
 Jovis O. M. auspicio a majoribus pignus Imperii con-
 ditam, quam non Porsena dedita urbe, non Galli capta,
 temerare potuissent, furore Principum excindi. Arserat
 & ante Capitolium civili bello, sed fraude privata. Nunc
 palam obsessum, palam incensum. Quibus armorum
 caulis: quo tantæ cladis pretio pro patria bellavimus?*

* See Hist. of the Rom. Repub. Vol. X. p. 106.

† The Text of Tacitus is obscure in this place, and has
 probably been corrupted. I have made the most I could
 of it.

‡ *Ex diverso trepidus miles, dux segnis, & veluti cap-
 tus animi, non lingua, non auribus competere: neque
 alienis consiliis regi, neque sua expedire: huc illuc cla-
 moribus hostium circumagi; quæ jusserat vetare, quæ
 vetuerat jubere. Mox, quod in perditis rebus solet, om-
 nes præcipere, nemo exsequi. Postremo, objectis armis,
 fugam & fallendi artes circumspectabant. Tac.*

posite party were disconcerted and terrified : A. R. 820. their chief, naturally timid, but then as it were A. C. 69. thunderstruck, seemed to have lost the use of his reason, tongue and ears : he would not be directed by the advice of others, and yet knew not what resolution to take himself, but ran from place to place, according as the enemy's shouts were most loud. One moment he forbid what he had just ordered, and then again ordered what he had just countermanded. There were soon as many commanders as men ; and as it generally happens in great dangers, all gave orders, but none obeyed them. At last, throwing down their arms, each sought for safety in flight. The conquerors entered furiously sword in hand, meeting with no resistance, except from a small number of brave officers, who soon lost their lives. Flavius Sabinus thought neither of defending himself nor of flying : he was taken, together with Quintius Atticus, then consul, who was more particularly remarked on account of that empty brilliant title, and the inconsiderate rashness with which he threw out among the people, his ordinances, full of great encomiums on Vespasian, and of bitter reproaches against Vitellius. The other persons of distinction escaped, some disguised like slaves, and others concealed by their faithful clients, or hid among the lumber. Some too taking notice of the word by which the enemies knew each other, made a good use of it, either to answer when asked, or to ask themselves, and with the help of that and a bold face escaped.

The very moment the fray began, Domitian hid himself in the apartment of the keeper of
 Domitian escapes the enemy,
 of

A.R. 820. of the temple ; after which, a sensible honest
 A. C. 69. freeman, putting one of the priest's garments
 over him, he remained unknown among them
 till the tumult was pretty well over, and then
 retired to a friend's house, where he waited the
 event. He afterwards erected two monuments
 in memory of what had passed : the one in
 his father's life-time, plain and modest, being
 a small chapel in honour of JUPITER the PRE-
 SERVER, in the place where the apartment of
 the clerk or keeper of the temple stood, which
 was pulled down, with an altar, and an in-
 scription on the marble, setting forth what had
 befallen him. The other was a magnificent
 temple, built when he was emperor, and de-
 dicated to THE GUARDIAN JUPITER, in which
 he placed a statue of that god holding him in
 his arms.

Death of
 Sabinus.
 His charac-
 ter.

Sabinus and Atticus, loaded with chains,
 were carried to Vitellius, who received him at
 the top of the palace stairs, without emotion
 or anger, to the great displeasure of those who
 came to desire his leave to put them to death,
 and to be rewarded for the service they pre-
 tended to have done him. The most audaci-
 ous exclaimed loudly with great rage and fury,
 and were backed by a numerous mob. Some
 menaced and others flattered, and all insisted
 on Sabinus's death. Vitellius endeavoured to
 move them by prayers and entreaties, but was
 at last forced to yield to their perverse obsti-
 nacy. They seized Sabinus directly, tore him
 to pieces, cut off his head, and dragged his
 body to the common place of execution.

Such

Such * was the end of a man, by no means A.R. 820.
to be held in contempt. He served the re-A. C. 69.
public five and thirty years, and behaved with
honour both in peace and war. He never gave
any one room to accuse him of being covetous or unjust: he was too talkative, and that was the only failing his enemies could ever tax him with, in the great employments he held: for he was seven years governor of Mæsia, and twelve years prefect of Rome. In the catastrophe in which he perished, some thought him timid and cowardly, whilst others imputed it to his unwillingness to shed the blood of the citizens. Whatever motive it be ascribed to, it is certain he did not behave like a man capable of heading any great enterprize: and if what Tacitus assures us be true, that Sabinus was the honour of his family before Vespasian was raised to the empire; at least it is plainly proved by facts, that Vespasian had a better head, and more resolution than Sabinus. His death was a satisfaction to Mucian: and politicians thought it likewise of advantage to the public tranquillity, because a perfect harmony could hardly have subsisted between two men who might have made equal claims, the one as brother to the emperor, and the other as having given him the empire.

Tac

* Hic exitus fuit viri haud sane spernendi. Quinque & triginta stipendia in Republica fecerat, domi militiaeque clarus. Innocentiam justitiamque ejus non argueres: sermonis nimius erat. Id unum septem annis, quibus Mœsiam, duodecim, quibus Præfecturam urbis obtinuit, calumniatus est rumor. In fine vitæ alii segnem, multi moderatum & civium sanguinis parcum credidere. Quod inter omnes constiterit, ante principatum Vespasiani decus domus penes Sabinum erat. Tac.

A. R. 820. The people demanded the consul's death A. C. 69. too ; but Vitellius persisted in refusing it. He was highly pleased at Quintius's declaring to whoever would hear it, that it was he who set fire to the capitol. Whether what he said was true or false, Quintius took upon himself the odium of that deplorable event, and acquitted Vitellius's party of it.

The town
of Terra-
cina sur-
prised and
sacked by
L. Vitel-
lius.

At the same time L. Vitellius, with his six cohorts, menaced and pressed Terracina, where, as I have said, the marines of the Misænum fleet; and a great number of gladiators, the former * commanded by Apollinaris, and the latter by Julianus, had shut themselves up. Those two chiefs but ill deserved the name of commanders : their licentious rashness and extreme negligence fitted them rather for gladiators. They kept no guard, nor thought of fortifying the weak parts of the town : but taken up with their pleasures both day and night, they gave entertainments and concerts, making the soldiers subservient to their luxury, and talking of war only when they were at table. Apinius Tiro who had joined them, left Terracina, in order to visit the neighbouring towns, and raise contributions from them, by which he did the party much more hurt than good.

A slave found means to pass over from the town to L. Vitellius's camp, and offered to introduce

* *Præerat . . . Julianus gladiatoribus, Apollinaris remigibus, lascivia socordiaque gladiatorum magis, quam ducum similes. Non Vigiliis agere, non intuta mœnium firmare : noctu dieque fluxi, & amœna littorum personantes, in ministerium luxus dispersis militibus, de bello tantum inter convivia loquebantur. Tac.*

introduce his troops privately into the citadel. A.R. 820. His offer was accepted, and easily put in execution: the garrison, as supinely negligent as its commanders, was surprized in the dead of the night. Vitellius's men rushed sword in hand upon their enemies, and made a dreadful slaughter of them, some being quite unarmed, others suddenly awaked from their sleep, amazed and terrified by the horrors of the dark, the sound of trumpets, and the menacing shouts of the victors. Only a few gladiators made a brave defence, and sold their lives very dear; the rest ran towards their ships, where the tumult and confusion was not less than in the town. Several of the inhabitants flying with the soldiers were likewise killed with them. Six ships escaped at the very beginning of the tumult, and the commander of the fleet, Apollinaris, was as careful to save himself, as he had been negligent and remiss before. The rest of the ships were taken on the shore, and some of them sunk by the precipitate hurry of the crowds that boarded them, without considering how much they were overloaded by it. Julianus was taken and delivered up to L. Vitellius, who ordered him to be scourged severely, and then killed in his presence. It was reported at that time that Triaria, L. Vitellius's wife, striving to equal her husband's insolence and cruelty, appeared in the streets of Terracina with a sword by her side, insulting over the misfortunes of the wretched inhabitants, and encouraging the massacre and plunder of them.

The conqueror immediately dispatched a courier to his brother, with the news of his exploit;

A.R. 820. exploit ; telling him at the same time, that he
 A. C. 69. waited his orders either to return to Rome,
 or remain in Campania, till that country should
 be quite reduced. Vitellius had not time to
 answer him, being prevented by the enemy's
 becoming master of the city, and his person,
 as I am going to relate : and it was a great
 happiness, not only for Vespasian's party, but
 for the republic too, that L. Vitellius did not
 of his own accord resolve to hasten to Rome :
 for the troops under his command, besides
 their valour and obstinate fidelity, were at that
 time greatly elated by their recent victory.
 Himself *, infamous as all his conduct was,
 did not want activity, and vice produced in
 him the same effects that love of good does in
 virtuous men : so that Primus would have met
 with some resistance on his arrival at Rome,
 and the city might have perished in the con-
 test. But it had enough to suffer without that :
 the few troops that Vitellius had, were a suf-
 ficient scourge to that capital of the world.

The victo-
 rious army
 did not
 make haste
 enough to
 Rome.
 Causes of
 the delay.

The slowness and delays of Primus's victo-
 rious army likewise contributed to the mis-
 fortunes of Rome. If his troops had made
 haste, they might have prevented the burning
 of the capitol, and the death of Sabinus ;
 events which cut off all hopes of reconcilia-
 tion between Vitellius and Vespasian. Instead
 of marching on with dispatch, they stopt at
 Otricoli, to celebrate the Saturnalian feasts,
 whilst Rome was in the utmost confusion and
 distress.

The

* Quippe L. Vitellio, quamvis infami, inerat industria :
 nec virtutibus, ut boni, sed, quomodo pessimus quisque,
 vitiis valebat. Tac.

The motive or excuse for so ill-timed a delay, was the pretended necessity of waiting for Mucian; though some were suspicious enough to accuse Primus of losing time purposely, because he was then in treaty with Vitellius, who offered him the consulship, and his daughter in marriage. Others rejected those reports as false and calumnious, and invented by Mucian's flatterers. And indeed it is hardly probable, that in the condition Vitellius then was, Primus, who had pulled him down, should think of raising him up again, by a treachery from which he could expect nothing but inevitable ruin. The most favourable, and perhaps the truest construction that can be put upon a delay, the consequences of which were so fatal, is, that all the generals of the victorious party, were desirous to save the city from the evils of war, and chose rather to threaten than to hurt it. Seeing Vitellius abandoned by his best troops, and absolutely destitute of all resource, they thought, not without reason, that the negotiation already began for him to abdicate, would succeed. But Sabinus spoilt all, first by his precipitate rashness in taking up arms, and afterwards by his want of courage to defend the capitol, a place able to resist very powerful armies, but which did not hold out four and twenty hours against only three cohorts.

These reasons have undoubtedly some weight; but they do not fully justify either Mucian or Primus. The former sufficiently declared by the ambiguous expressions in his letters, that he desired to be waited for. The latter, out of an ill-timed complaisance, or rather to make

A. R. 820. his rival responsible for the event, did wait.

A. C. 69. In short, all the commanders of that party, persuading themselves the war was over, marked the end of it with bloody calamities. Even Cærealis, who had great vivacity and fire, made no use of it on this occasion. For, being sent to Rome with a thousand horse through the Sabine territories, and by the Sellarian way, he marched very slowly, and quite at his ease.

On the news of the capitol's being besieged the army marches forward. Vitellius's deputation rejected.

At last the news of the capitol's being besieged roused them all from their lethargy, and forced them, but too late, to exert themselves. Primus arriving by the Flaminian way, at a place called Red-Stones, nine miles from Rome, learnt the burning of the capitol, and Sabinus's death. Cærealis, who was nearer, got thither before him; but had no cause to be much pleased with his diligence. Running on without precaution, thinking he had none but conquered troops to deal with, he was greatly surprised to find Vitellius's men drawn up in good order, horse and foot being intermixed to back and assist each other. A battle ensued not far from the city, between the houses and gardens. Vitellius's soldiers had the advantage of being best acquainted with the ground: besides which Cærealis's horse did not fight with equal zeal, several of them being of the number of those who had lately passed over to the victorious army near Narnia, and had not yet forgot their first engagement. Cærealis was beat: an officer of distinction called Tullius Flavianus made prisoner: the rest fled in disorder, and were pursued by the conquerors as far as Fidenæ.

This success animated the people in favour of Vitellius: the multitude, armed indeed, not

not regularly, but with whatever each could ^{A.R. 820.} lay his hand on, demanded with loud cries to ^{A.C. 69.} be led on to battle. Vitellius received those proofs of their affection with joy, and expressed his gratitude for them: but being sensible such soldiers could make no resistance against victorious legions, he assembled the senate, and caused deputies to be appointed to go and invite the army to peace and concord, screening himself under the name of the Republic, and alledging the good of the empire.

The deputies divided, and met with different treatment. Those that applied to Cærealis were in extreme danger from the fury of the soldiers, who would not hear of peace. Arulæus Rusticus, at that time prætor, and highly estimable for his merit and virtue, was wounded. Those that were with him dispersed and fled. The Lictor, who preceded him, attempting to keep off the mob, was killed on the spot: and if Cærealis had not appointed an escort to guard the deputies of the senate, the sacred character with which they were clothed would not have protected them, but the enraged citizens would have massacred them at the city gates, and been guilty of a crime that would have filled even strangers with horror. Those who went to Primus were received with greater respect, not that his troops were more reserved, but because he had a greater command over them.

With the deputies of the senate went, of his own accord, Musonius Rufus, a Roman knight, famous for his philosophical studies, and formerly banished by Nero on that account: but who, like a true stoic, exaggerated virtue, and

A.R. 820. spoilt his good qualities by his indiscreet zeal.

A. C. 69. This philosopher, as if he had been in his school among his disciples, preached up to the army the advantages of peace, and the misfortunes of war. Some laughed at, others were tired of him, and others again began to use him roughly. Terrified by their threats, and gently advised by some men of sense, he at last gave over displaying his wisdom, which suited neither the place, nor time, nor persons he was speaking to.

The Vestals too came out to meet Primus, bringing him a letter from Vitellius, wherein he desired only one day's delay, in order to resume the negociation, and settle all things. Primus paid the Vestals all the honour due to their character, but answered Vitellius, that Sabinus's death, and the burning of the capitol, required vengeance, and cut off all possibility of treating.

Primus wished however to be able to spare Rome, and calling an assembly of the soldiers, endeavoured to prevail on them to encamp at Ponte-mole, and defer entering the city till the next day. He was apprehensive, that the resistance they would meet with, might induce them to spare neither the people, senate, nor temple of the gods. But it was not in his power to keep them back. Every delay seemed suspicious, and detrimental to their expected victory: the more so, as the colours they saw flying on the hills around Rome, though followed only by a despicable mob, indicated in their opinions a numerous army of enemies,

Accordingly

Accordingly they marched directly on, and A.R. 320,
dividing into three bodies, some continued on A. C. 69.
in the Flaminian way where they were ; ano- The city
ther party took to the right along the Tiber, taken.
and a third division advanced towards the gate
Colline. Vitellius's men were without the city
walls. The militia raised among the people
did not hold out a moment against the enemy's
horse. The old soldiers stood their ground,
and fought bravely. The place where they
engaged not being open, but intersected by
houses and buildings, the general action was
divided into numbers of skirmishes, in which
Vespasian's troops, being better governed, and
commanded by better officers, had the advan-
tage every where : only those who took to the
left suffered greatly from the narrowness and
difficulties of the streets : Vitellius's soldiers,
getting up on the walls of the gardens, drove
them back with showers of stones and arrows,
till towards the evening, the gate Colline hav-
ing been forced by Vespasian's horse, they were
surrounded. A battle in form was likewise
fought in the Campus Martius, and Vitellius's
men, whose despair was their own resource,
were conquered there too. Forced to retreat
within the walls of Rome, they rallied there
in small bodies, determined to hold out to the
last extremity.

The people enjoyed the sight ; and, as if it
had been a battle fought purposely to divert
them, clapped their hands, and encouraged
sometimes one, and sometimes the other party.
When either of them was worsted, the specta-
tors called out to the conquerors, to kill those
that had taken shelter in the shops and houses,
The

A.R. 820. the victorious soldiers thought of nothing but
 A. C. 69. blood and slaughter, whilst the people took
 care to strip the slain.

Strange
 mixture of
 licentious
 diversions
 and cruel-
 ty.

The day on which this violence and slaughter was committed, being one of the saturnalian holidays, a season of pleasure and diversion in the nature of our Carnival, the appearance of * things in Rome, was strange beyond all imagination. In one place was bloodshed and battle, in another baths open, and taverns full of drunkards: the greatest excesses of debauchery were committed amidst streams of blood, and heaps of dead bodies: every concomitant of voluptuous idleness and licentiousness was intermixed with all the horrors that attend the sacking of a town; so that the city seemed to be in a fit of fury and madness, and at the same time intoxicated with pleasure.

Rome had already seen armies of her own citizens fight against each other within her walls. Sylla had made her bleed twice, and Cinna once; nor were their victories attended with less cruelty. But what characterises the event I am now speaking of, is a difference that shocks humanity: pleasures and diversions suffered no interruption by it, as if what happened

* *Sæva ac deformis urbe tota facies. Alibi prælia & vulnèra, alibi balneæ popinæque: simul cruor & strues corporum, juxta scorta, & scortis similes: quantum in luxurioso otio libidinum, quidquid in acerbissima captivitate scelerum: prorsus ut eandem civitatem & furere crederes, & lascivire.*

Confluxerant ante armati exercitus in urbe, bis L. Sulla, semel Cinna, victoribus, nec tunc minus crudelitatis: nunc inhumana securitas, & ne minimo quidem temporis voluptates intermissæ, velut festis diebus id quoque gaudium accederet. Exultabant, fruebantur, nulla partium cura, malis publicis, læti. Tac.

ed had been a joyous addition to the festival. A.R. 820. Dancing, frolicking and laughing was all the A. C. 69. Romans minded : the public misfortunes gave them no concern, nor did they seem to care which side got the better.

The city was taken : but the prætorian camp, ^{The præ-} to which the bravest of the conquered had re- ^{torian} treated, resolved to defend it as their last hope ^{camp} still resisted. The conquerors were bent on ^{forced,} driving them from that asylum ; and especially the old prætorians, broke by Vitellius and restored by Vespasian, were obstinate in it. All that the art of war had then invented for attacking the strongest places, was made use of against the walls of the camp. Each man encouraging his comrade, cried out, " The finishing stroke was then to be put to their work, and they should at least reap the reward of all the dangers and labours they had undergone. That they had restored the city to the senate and people, and the temples to the gods. But that the camp was the centre of the soldier's glory, his country, and ought to be dear to him as his household gods. That if they did not that instant force their way in, they would be obliged to spend the whole night under arms." The besieged on their side, thoughless numerous, and already so often conquered, would not hear of surrendering, but still obstinately persisted to dispute the victory. Covered with blood, they embraced their standards and altars, the last consolation of dying men : many struggling against death to their last grasp, expired on the tops of the towers and ramparts ; and at last, when the gates were forced, the few remaining combatants

A.R. 920. combatants rushed upon the victors, and, ene-
A.C. 69. my like *, died of the wounds they received
in their breasts, fond of preserving their hon-
our to the last moment.

Vitellius's
tragical
death.

Tac. Hist.

III. 85.

Suet. Vit.

16, & 17.

Dio.

Vitellius little deserved to have such brave
soldiers. The cowardice he had so often shewn,
and of which he gave fresh proofs at his death,
forms a very great contrast with the valour of
those who lost their lives in his cause. So
soon as he found the city was taken, he slipped
out of his palace by a back door, and was
carried in a chair to his wife's house on mount
Aventinus, taking with him only two of his
domestics, a cook, and a baker. His design
was, if he could remain there the rest of the
day undiscovered, to go to Terracina, and
throw himself into the arms of the cohorts
commanded by his brother. He did not con-
tinue long in the place he had chosen for his
retreat, but changing his mind, either † out
of mere fickleness, as Tacitus says, and be-
cause people who are terrified, are apt to think
every situation better than that they are in; or
rather, as Suetonius thinks, misled by a false
report that was spread of peace, he returned
to the palace. He found it quite deserted:
all, even the lowest of the slaves, had fled, or
avoided meeting him. Even his cook and
baker forsook him. The solitude ‡ of the
place,

* Et cecidere omnes contrariis vulneribus, versi in
hostem. Ea cura etiam morientibus decori exitus fuit.
Tac.

† Mobilitate ingenii, & quæ natura pavoris est, quum
omnia metuenti præsentia maxime despicerent. *Tac.*

‡ Terret solitudo, & tacentes locittentat clausa, in-
horrescit vacuis: fessusque misero errore, & pudenda
latebra semet occultans, ab Julio Placido tribuno cohorti
protrahitur. *Tac.*

place, and the silence that reigned throughout A.R. 820- the vast empty spaces, filled him with dread. A. C. 69- He opened the apartments, and shuddered with terror when he found them empty. At last, tired of running he knew not where, he tied about his waist a girdle filled with gold, and hid himself in the porter's lodge, near which a great dog was tied up. Suetonius adds, that he stopped up the door of the lodge (probably on the outside to prevent its being seen) with the bedding of the slave whose place he took.

This shameful asylum, as Tacitus justly calls it, could not save him. Those who were hunting after him, finding no body in the palace, made a strict search, and forcibly dragging him from his lurking hole, asked him (for they did not know him) Where they could find Vitellius. He told them some lie or other at first, but it was not possible to deceive them long: he was soon known, and then stooped to the most humble prayers and supplications, begging they would but spare his life, and he would be content to live in a prison; adding, that he had secrets to disclose which nearly concerned Vespasian. His prayers were not heard, and a tribune, called Julius Placidus *, ordered his hands to be tied behind him, a rope to be put about his neck, and his clothes to be torn off; in which condition he was dragged to the Forum like a criminal going to execution: a sad, and dreadful sight, which however only drew insults upon him and not tears, his

* *Vinctæ post tergum manus: laniata veste, fœdum spectaculum ducebatur, multis increpantibus, nullo illa-crymante: deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat. Tac.*

A.R. 820. his own infamy stifling all compassion. The
A. C. 69. mob pelted him with dirt and dung, pursuing him with a thousand invectives, calling him an incendiary, because the capital had been burnt, a glutton and a drunkard. Even his bodily defects were reproached him, his enormous size and red face, illuminated with wine, his great belly, and tottering walk, (for he had a weakness in his legs, occasioned by a blow he received from one of the chariots in the circus, when attending on Caligula there,) did not escape their censure. A soldier belonging to the German armies meeting him in that condition, drew his sword, and, either out of indignation, and to rescue him from such insults, or that he owed the tribune, and not Vitellius, a grudge, cut off the tribune's ear, for which he was killed on the spot.

Vitellius was still dragged along the sacred street, his hair being thrown back to shew his face, and the point of a sword held under his chin to prevent his stooping to hide his confusion. In that condition he was forced to see his own statues thrown down and stamped on, and to look at the place where Galba was murdered. After which he was dragged to the Gemoniæ, or common place of execution, where Sabinus's body lay. Vitellius shewed all this time the utmost lowness of soul, except on one occasion, when a tribune insulting him, he answered, "I have however been thy emperor." The soldiers who seized him took a barbarous pleasure in pricking him with the points of their swords, and hacking him piece-meal, to make him feel all the pangs
of

of a slow death : and * the mob, always out-rageous and running into extremes, heaped as many curses on him after his death, as they had praises whilst he lived. His body was dragged through the Tiber with a hook, and his head stuck on a pike, and carried through the city. His widow Galerica took care however to see him buried at last.

Such was the deplorable end of that emperor in the fifty-fifth year of his age. Vitellius was indebted to others for every thing he possessed. It † was not by his personal merit, but in virtue of his father's name and reputation, that he obtained the consulship, several priesthoods, and a distinguished rank in the city and senate. Those who raised him to the empire did not know him. It is very remarkable that, cowardly as he was, he was better beloved by the troops than many of the greatest and best generals had ever been. It must however be owned, that he was open and liberal, virtues which easily ruin a prince, when not conducted with prudence and discretion. He thought to make and secure himself friends
by

* Et vulgus eadem pravitate insectabatur interfectum; qua foverat viventem. *Tac.*

† Consulatum, Sacerdotia, nomen locumque inter primores, nulla sua industria, sed cuncta patris claritudine adeptus. Principatum ei detulere qui ipsum non noverant. Studia exercitus raro cuiquam bonis artibus quæsita perinde adfuere, quam huic per ignaviam. Inerat tamen simplicitas ac liberalitas, quæ, ni adsit modus, in exitium vertuntur. Amicitias dum magnitudine munerum, non constantia morum, confinare putat, meruit magis quam habuit. Reipublicæ haud dubie intererat Vitellium vinci: sed imputare perfidiam non possunt qui Vitellium Vespasiano prodidere, quum a Galba discivissent. *Tac.*

A.R. 820. by the greatness of his gifts, without backing
 A. C. 69. them by a continued series of virtuous deeds.
 But the event shewed how much he was mistaken. It was certainly, says Tacitus, for the interest of the republic, that Vitellius should be conquered. But the men who abandoned and betrayed him to favour Vespasian, could claim no merit from that treachery, for they had served Galba so before.

Death of
 his brother
 and son.
Tac. Hist.
 IV. 2.

Vitellius's whole family fell with him. His brother was marching towards Rome, at the head of the cohorts with which he had surprised Terracina. The citizens, easily terrified, and always ready to flatter the present reigning monarch, earnestly desired troops might be sent against L. Vitellius, and the remainder of the enemies destroyed. Their desires were granted. The victorious cavalry were sent to Africa, and followed by the legions, who however did not proceed beyond Bovillæ. L. Vitellius did not attempt to resist, but surrendered up himself and his cohorts to the conqueror's mercy: and his men *, as much out of indignation as fear, laid down their unfortunate arms.

Those who surrendered were led, as in triumph, through the city, between two ranks of armed men. Not one of them had the air of a suppliant, but their looks spoke sorrow and
 bravery,

* *Et miles infelicia arma, haud minus ira quam metu, abiecit. Longus deditorum ordo, septus armatis, per urbem incessit. Nemo supplici vultu, sed tristes & truces, & adversum plausus ac lasciviam insultantis vulgi immobiles. Paucos erumpere ausos circumjecti pressere: ceteri in custodiam conditi: nihil quisquam locutus indignum, &, quanquam inter adversa, salva virtutis fama.*
Tac.

bravery. Nor could the insults of the popu-
lace force a complaint from them : on the con-
trary, some stepped out of their ranks to chastize
the insolence of the mob, but were killed on
the spot : the rest were locked up in prisons.
They bore all without uttering a word unbe-
coming their courage, and preserved their
glory unsullied in the depth of misery.

L. Vitellius suffered death. He was as bad
as his brother, but more vigilant in his pros-
perity, of which he had a less share than of
his adversity.

The emperor Vitellius's son, though very
young, and having such an impediment in his
speech, that he could barely articulate a word,
likewise forfeited his life, for the dangerous
honour of having a father clothed with the
purple of the Cæsars. Mucian did not think
proper to let that last branch of an enemy's
family subsist : and his cruelty in that must
have been the more odious, when compared
with Vitellius's clemency towards Otho's and
Vespasian's relations, not one of which were
hurt by him ; for Sabinus's death ought not to
be laid to his charge.

Vitellius's daughter was however spared.
Mucian let her live ; and Vespasian, who did
not act on the principal of a suspicious policy,
found a suitable match for her, and gave her
a handsome fortune.

Of all those who had an influence over Vi-
tellius, none was hurt, but the freeman Asia-
ticus, who suffered the death ordained for
slaves, and by that atoned for the ill use he
had made of his power. The two prætorian
prefects, Julius Priscus and Alphænus Varus,
were

Tac. Hist.

iv. 80.

Suet. Vit. 6.

§ 18.

Dio.

Vespasian

marries off

his daugh-

ter.

Suet. Vesp.

c. 14.

The free-

man Asia-

ticus suf-

fers the

death or-

dained for

slaves.

Tac. Hist.

iv. 11.

A.R. 820. were only broke ; and it was without any manner of necessity that the former killed himself. His colleague enjoyed his life and liberty in peace.

Before I proceed to Vespasian's reign, I ought to give an account of some foreign wars, which more properly belong to Vitellius's. Such were those in Mœsia and Pontus : but especially the nether Germany was disturbed by a most violent war, which communicated to a part of Gaul ; and, proceeding from the intestine divisions and troubles of the Romans, after causing them very great losses, not without some mixture of shame and ignominy, could not at last be ended but by the restoration of the empire to tranquillity and good order, under the government of Vespasian. I shall begin with the slight insurrections in Mœsia and Pontus, which will require but few words.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Incursions of the Dacians into Mæsia stopt by Mucian. Insurrection in Pontus, quelled by Vespasian. Civilis, a Batavian, makes his nation revolt. The Romans driven out of the Batavian island. Civilis attempts to gain over the Gauls. Another Victory gained by Civilis over the Romans. Eight Batavian cohorts, old troops, who had long served in the Roman armies, join Civilis. He makes all his troops swear allegiance to Vespasian. He besieges the camp of Vetera. Flaccus marches to succour the besieged. Seditions perpetually breaking out. Flaccus retreats, and Vocula remains at the head of the enterprize. New seditions. Incursions of the Germans in alliance with Civilis. Civilis attempts in vain to force the camp of Vetera. The news of the battle of Cremona known in Germany. Civilis's intrigues to raise the Gauls. Civilis detaches part of his army to attack Vocula. Combat in which the Romans are conquerors. Vocula gains a second victory before Vetera; and makes the enemy raise the siege. Vocula loses the fruit of his victories. The camp of Vetera besieged again. Another Sedition. Flaccus is killed by his soldiers. What ensued after Flaccus's death, till the revolt of the Gauls.

THE Dacians, ever uneasy, thought of taking up arms again the moment they were delivered from fear by the absence of the Mæisian army, gone to attack Vitellius. They remained quiet however some time longer, waiting

A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.
Incursions of the Dacians into Mæsia, stopt by Mucian.
Tac. Hist.
III. 46.

A.R. 820. waiting the event of things. So soon as they
 A. C. 69. knew that a civil war had broke out in Italy, and that the armies of the two contending parties had begun to engage, they proceeded to action, forced the winter quarters of the auxiliary troops, horse and foot, left by the Romans in that country, and, making themselves masters of both shores of the Danube, were preparing to attack the camp of the legions, who would not have been able to resist them. Mucian happened fortunately to be in those parts at that time. He had learnt the victory Antonius Primus had gained at Cremona, and being consequently in no violent hurry to get to Italy, undertook to check the incursions of the Dacians, sending his sixth legion against them, by which they were soon drove back beyond the river. In order to secure the tranquillity of that province more effectually, he gave the command of it to Fonteius Agrippa, late proconsul of Asia, together with part of the troops who, after fighting for Vitellius in Italy, were ordered back to Illyria, and whom it was policy to divide into different bodies, and employ in a war against a foreign enemy.

Insurrection in Pontus, quelled by Vespasian.

A mean slave, called Anicetus, was the cause of the war that broke out in Pontus. He was a freeman to Polemon, the last king of that country, who consented under Nero to have his kingdom reduced into a Roman province. Anicetus, all powerful under Polemon, found his condition greatly altered by the Roman government. He therefore took advantage of their intestine troubles, and, pretending great zeal for Vespasian, gained over the people
 bordering

bordering on the Euxine sea, and by promis- A.R. 820.
ing great plunder and booty, secured the as- A. C. 69.
sistance of those whose desperate fortunes left
them no other resource, and by that means
soon saw himself at the head of an army, by no
means contemptible. He attacked Trebisonde,
an ancient Greek colony, and took it, cutting
to pieces the garrison, which consisted of a co-
hort, originally composed of foreigners, who
afterwards assuming the name of Roman citi-
zens, and with that name, says Tacitus, took
Roman arms and standards, retaining how-
ever all the licentiousness and indolence natu-
ral to the Greeks.

The Roman fleet in the Euxine sea had been
weakened by Mucian; who had sent the best
ships and soldiers belonging to it to Byzan-
tium. Anicetus attacked with fire and sword
what remained of that fleet; fell upon the
coasts of Pontus, and the barbarians, becoming
masters of the sea, over-run it with impunity
in ships of a particular construction. Neither
iron nor brass were used in building them.
Their bottoms were wide, and sides narrow,
and when the sea grew rough and stormy, they
heightened those sides, by adding planks which
met at top and formed a kind of roof. With
these light vessels, which could not contain
above five-and-twenty, or at most thirty men,
they braved the dangers of the waves, sailing
backwards as well as forwards, both head and
stern being built alike.

Vespasian was informed of these disturban-
ces before he left Judæa, and immediately sent
a considerable detachment of good troops un-
der the command of Viridius Geminus, a brave

A.R. 820. and experienced officer, who easily defeated an
 A. C. 69. enemy ignorant of all discipline, and spread
 about the country without order, in quest of
 plunder. The barbarians found an asylum in
 their ships. But Viridius had others built, and
 overtook Amicetus at the mouth of a river,
 which Tacitus calls Cohibus, where the rebel
 thought himself secure under the protection of
 the king of the Sedochezians, whom he had
 gained over by making him great presents. In
 fact, that king seemed at first disposed to de-
 fend him with his arms; but when, on one
 side, he was offered a certain subsidy if he gave
 up Amicetus, and on the other threatened with
 war if he refused, his fidelity, of which much
 could not be expected from a barbarian, for-
 sook him, and he was pretty easily prevailed
 on to sell both the leader and his followers,
 for a sum of money agreed on by both sides.
 By that means the war in Pontus was ended
 almost as soon as begun.

Civilis. a
 Batavian,
 makes his
 nation re-
 volt.
Tac. Hist.
 iv. 12.

Not so the Batavian war, of which I am go-
 ing to speak. That nation, formerly a part of
 the Catti in Germany, and driven from their
 country by intestine broils, retained all the
 fierceness of their origin, in the new habitation
 they pitched upon, which was an island formed
 by the right arm of the Rhine, the Vahal, and
 the sea. The face of that country has been
 much altered since those times: but Betaw,
 or Betavia, as I have elsewhere observed, still
 preserves their name. They were rather allied,
 than subject to the Romans. Nor did they
 suffer so disproportioned a friendship to crush
 them. They paid no tribute, but only fur-
 nished the empire with soldiers, whose valour
 was

was often of great service in the German wars. A. R. 820. They had likewise gained great honour in Britain, and I have several times had occasion to speak of eight Batavian cohorts, who, being attached as auxiliaries to the fourteenth legion, became its rivals and enemies. Their cavalry was excellent, and used to swim over the Rhine without a man's quitting his horse or arms, or even breaking his rank. A. C. 69.

The most illustrious of that nation, at the time I am speaking of, was Claudius Civilis, distinguished above all for his high birth, being of royal descent; his personal bravery, and endowments of mind, fertile, cunning, and active; we are not much acquainted with his name, though he deserves to be as well known, as most of the greatest generals recorded in history,

He had reason not to be satisfied with the Romans. His brother Julius Paulus, falsely accused of treason, had been put to death by order of Fonteius Capito, who commanded in lower Germany before Vitellius. I have observed elsewhere, that Civilis was himself in danger of suffering the same fate. His resentment for his brother's death, and his own peril, induced him to seize the opportunity of the civil war to take revenge. But he was too cunning to act openly, or warn the Romans to look upon him as an enemy, and treat him as such by a manifest rebellion. Sertorius and Hannibal were the models he proposed to imitate, intending to be like them for arts and stratagems, as he was in his face, for he too had but one eye. He therefore resolved to work underhand, and hide his play. Accordingly

A. R. 820. ingly he pretended to espouse Vespasian's
 A. C. 69. cause, for which he had a specious pretence,
 very fit to give an air of sincerity to all his
 steps. Antonius Primus had wrote to him to
 prevent the departure of the succours Vitellius
 had sent for, and to amuse the legions on the
 Rhine, under pretence of some disturbance or
 other in Germany. Hordeonius Flaccus who
 commanded on the spot, likewise desired him
 to behave in that manner, as much out of in-
 clination to Vespasian's party, as affection to
 the republic, in danger of perishing, if a new
 inundation of numerous troops should pour in
 upon Italy, and revive the war.

Civilis finding he should be able to conceal
 his intended revolt, under the appearance of
 obedience to the private orders of the Roman
 generals, immediately set to work ; and found
 the Batavians already disposed to rise by a very
 singular circumstance. Vitellius had ordered
 soldiers to be levied among them, and that
 burden, heavy in itself, was rendered quite
 unsupportable by the tyrannical proceedings of
 those who enlisted them. Their greedy cove-
 tousness was such, that they took old and sick
 men, and made them pay a ransom before they
 were dismissed. A motive still more infa-
 mous engaged them to take young lads before
 they were of proper age to bear arms. The
 whole nation was incensed, and Civilis's emis-
 saries took care to foment the sedition, and
 easily persuaded the Batavians to refuse to en-
 list. Civilis himself, under pretence of giving
 a great entertainment, assembled in one of their
 sacred woods, the chief nobility, and those
 among the lower class, whose courage and bra-
 very

very were most signal, and when they began A.R. 820.
to wax warm with wine and good cheer, open- A.C. 69.
ed his mind to them.

After extolling the ancient glory of their nation, and observing how much they were degraded and dishonoured by the insults and outrages they suffered, being treated more like slaves than allies, he added, that no opportunity had ever offered so fair as the present, to gain their liberty. "The Romans, said he, are weakened by their own divisions. None but old men are left in their camps upon the Rhine, where we are sure of a rich and easy booty. Dare but to lift up your eyes, and be not terrified by empty shadows of legions without reality. We are strong in horse and foot, and can depend on the assistance of our neighbours and brothers, the Germans. The Romans* themselves will not be much displeased at our war. If the success prove doubtful, we will make a merit of it with Vespasian: victory carries with it its own apology."

This speech was greatly applauded by all that heard it, and Civilis made them take the most solemn oaths known to barbarians. He likewise applied to the Caninefates, whose origin was the same with the Batavians, and who, inhabiting the same island, were not inferior to them in any respect, but in number. He applied also to the eight Batavian cohorts, already often mentioned, who were returning
to

* Ne Romanis quidem ingratum id bellum, cujus ambiguum fortunam Vespasiano imputaturos: victoriæ rationem non reddi. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. to Germany by Vitellius's order, and were at
A. C. 69. that time at Mentz.

The Romans driven out of the Batavian island.

The Caninefates took the field first ; and, till Civilis and the Batavians should think proper to declare themselves, chose for their leader a man of great birth, and in high esteem among the barbarians for his brutal courage. His name was Brinno, and he was son to a man who, after having attacked the Romans several times in a hostile manner, had laughed with impunity at the phantom of war, Caligula had attempted to frighten the Germans with. The Caninefates were pleased with a name that had ever been at enmity with Rome. Brinno, exalted on the soldiers shoulders, was solemnly proclaimed their general in that war.

He was immediately joined by the Frisons from the other side of the Rhine, and opened the campaign by taking a camp in the island of the Batavians, in which were two cohorts, who did not in the least dream of being so attacked. They were cut to pieces or put to flight, and a great number of sutlers and Roman traders, fearing no harm from people they thought their friends, and suddenly surprised by this unexpected war, fell into the conqueror's hands. Several castles and forts must have suffered the same fate with the camp, if the præfects of the cohorts, unable to defend, had not thought it most prudent to burn them. They retired with all the troops they had, to the farther part of the island, where they formed a small army, but very unequal to the rebels ; for most of them were raw soldiers, to whom their arms were rather a load and burden than a means of defence, and very badly

badly, replaced the old troops Vitellius had ordered into Italy. Besides these land forces, the Romans had a fleet of four-and-twenty sail, which they took care to collect and station near them. A. R. 820.
A. C. 69.

Civilis first tried what art and cunning would do. Pretending to be still a friend to the Romans, he blamed the præfect for leaving their fortresses; and advises them to return to their winter quarters, and depend on his taking care to disperse that handful of rebels with his cohort. His design was to facilitate a victory over troops separated and remote from each other. The Roman officers perceived his drift, and the intelligence they received from all hands, left them no room to doubt, but that Civilis was the real author and head of the rebellion, and that Brinno only lent him his name. The Germans, passionately fond of war, could not keep a secret that gave them so much pleasure.

Civilis, finding artifice would not do, had recourse to open force. He put himself at the head of the rebels, and attacked the Romans in their post, being followed by the Caninefates, Frisons, and Batavians. The Romans prepared to give them a warm reception, and drew up their sea and land forces in order of battle: but the engagement was hardly begun, when a cohort of Tongrians deserted, and went over to Civilis; by which the party they forsook was greatly disconcerted, being attacked at the same time by allies as well as enemies. The fleet was not less perfidious. Part of the rowers were Batavians, who, pretending want of skill, embarrassed the operations of such sailors and soldiers as were faithful; but growing

A.R. 820. ing bolder by degrees, they resisted, and al-
 A. C. 69. tered the course of the ships, turning their
 sterns towards the enemy instead of their heads.
 At last they attacked the centurions and tri-
 bunes, and killed such as would not join them ;
 by which means the four-and-twenty ships, of
 which the fleet consisted, were either given up
 to the rebels, or taken by them. The land
 forces were not able to recover the disorder in-
 to which they had been thrown at first ; and
 Civilis gained a complete victory.

This first exploit was of great advantage to
 the rebels, to whom it procured arms and
 ships, of which they had much need ; and
 made a great noise in Gaul and Germany,
 where Civilis and his associates were celebrated
 and extolled, as the avengers of the common
 liberty. The Germans, their nearest and
 bravest neighbours, offered all the assistance
 they could give. The Gauls were not so easily
 moved, though Civilis tried every method to
 gain their alliance. The cohorts he had just
 conquered were Gauls, as well as their com-

Civilis's at-
 tempts to
 gain over
 the Gauls.

manders. He sent back the officers he had
 taken prisoners without ransom : and gave the
 soldiers their choice, either to remain with him
 or go, promising the greatest encouragement
 and distinction to such as should share his for-
 tune ; and giving even those that left him some
 share of the Roman spoils.

These liberalities were a bait, to allure them
 the better to relish the speeches, by which he
 exhorted them to revolt. He represented to
 them the extreme hardships they had suffered
 for so many years past, in a wretched state of
 servitude, disguised under the name of peace.

“ The

“ The Batavians, said he, though exempt A.R.820.
 “ from tribute, have taken up arms against A. C. 96.
 “ those tyrants of the universe, and the very
 “ first opportunity that offered, conquered
 “ the Romans, and put them to flight. What
 “ then might not be done, if the Gauls too
 “ would shake off the yoke? What are the
 “ forces that Italy has remaining? It is by the
 “ blood of one province, that another pro-
 “ vince is subdued.” He alledged the exam-
 ple of Germany, which recovered its liberty
 by the defeat and death of Varus, and that too
 at a time when Augustus, and not a Vitellius,
 governed the empire. He observed, that the
 natural valour of the Gauls was heightened
 by the discipline they had learned in the Roman
 armies; and after giving them the highest
 hopes of success, spurred them on by awaking
 the love of liberty in them. “ Let Syria,
 “ Asia, and the East, said he, accustomed to
 “ obey kings, endure servitude. Gaul still has
 “ many citizens who were born * before taxes
 “ and imposts were laid upon them. Even
 “ the

* If we go back to Cæsar’s time, that date is too re-
 mote, and Tacitus’s proposition would exceed all probabi-
 lity; for it was near a hundred and twenty years after
 the conquest of Gaul, that Civilis’s rebellion happened.
 But Cæsar’s wars against the Gauls were immediately fol-
 lowed by civil wars amongst the Romans, which for
 twenty years running put the whole empire in combus-
 tion, and did not leave the conquerors of Gaul time to set-
 tle the affairs of that country. It was Augustus, who in
 his seventh consulship reduced Gaul entirely into a Ro-
 man province, and subjected it to certain fixed tributes.
 Even that is a great distance of time; for, reckoning from
 Augustus’s 7th consulship, this would be the 98th year.

A.D. 69. " the brute creation is jealous of preserving
 A.C. 69. " the liberty it receives from nature : and shall
 " men, full of strength and valour, renounce
 " so precious a gift ? Take * advantage of this
 " favourable opportunity the gods offer you.
 " Your tyrants are distracted by their own in-
 " testine broils, and have many things to do :
 " you have but one. They are fatigued and
 " harrassed by their losses : your forces are still
 " entire. Whilst they are thus divided be-
 " tween Vitellius and Vespasian, you may
 " easily get rid of both." Thus did Civilis,
 extending his views both to Gaul and Germany
 at once, flatter the inhabitants of those vast
 and powerful regions with the thoughts of li-
 berty, whilst his design was to make himself
 master of them.

Another
 victory
 gained by
 Civilis over
 the Ro-
 mans.

Hordeonius Flaccus, commander in chief of
 the Romans in both Germanies, connived at,
 and favoured Civilis's first steps, for the rea-
 sons I have mentioned. But when he saw a
 camp forced, cohorts cut to pieces, and the
 Romans driven out of the Batavian island, he
 found the affair grew serious, and ordered Mum-
 mius Luperculus, who commanded the camp
 called Vetera, in which two legions were in
 winter quarters, to take the field and march
 against the enemy. Mummius obeyed. To
 the two legions that were with him, which
 both together did not make above five thousand
 men, he joined the succours furnished by the
 Ubians and people of Treves, and a regiment
 of Batavian horse, long since gained over by
 the

* Deos fortioribus adesse, Proinde arriperent vacui oc-
 cupatos, integri fessos. Dum alii Vespasianum, alii Vi-
 tellium foveant, patere locum adversus utrumque. Tac.

the rebels, though an appearance of fidelity was still kept up, in order to make the treachery more fatal to the Romans, by executing it during the very battle. With these troops he marched against Civilis, who was soon found. The brave Batavian met him, bearing before him the standards of the cohorts he had conquered, as a trophy to animate his own men by the remembrance of their recent glory, and to strike his enemies with terror. He placed, as was the German custom, in the rear of the army, his mother and sisters, and the wives and children of the officers and soldiers, to encourage them, by the sight of those dear objects, to fight hard for victory, or prevent their flying if they gave ground.

The signal being given for the attack, the air was instantly rent with the confused howls of the one, and the warlike songs of the others intermixed. The Romans answered with a weak shout denoting fear. In fact, they saw their left wing quite uncovered by the desertion of the Batavian horse, who went over to Civilis, and in a moment, from friends, that they were thought before, became enemies. The legions however stood firm and kept their ranks : but the auxiliaries, as well Ubians, as those that came from Treves, fled shamefully, and dispersed about the country. The Germans pursued, and by that means gave the legions time to regain their camp.

Civilis did not well know what to do with Claudius Labeo, who commanded the Batavian horse. They had long been rivals, and chiefs of opposite factions in their own country. Civilis apprehended, that by putting him
to

A.R. 820. to death, he should make himself odious to his
A. C. 69. countrymen ; and if he let him live, he would
be a continual promoter of trouble and discord,
He chose a medium, and sent him into Fries-
land beyond the Rhine.

Eight Bata-
vian co-
horts, old
troops, who
had long
served in
the Ro-
man ar-
mies, join
Civili-
s.

He received soon after a considerable rein-
forcement by the junction of the eight Bata-
vian cohorts, to which, as I have already said,
he made application. They were marching to
Italy, in consequence of Vitellius's orders, when
Civili's messenger met them. They imme-
diately resolved to espouse the common cause
of their country : but as they were surrounded
by Roman troops, did not think proper to de-
clare directly, but that they might have a pre-
tence for leaving their allies, tried to pick a
quarrel with them, by insisting on a general
gratification, double pay, and other advanta-
ges which Vitellius had promised. Flaccus,
thinking to calm them, granted part of their
demands ; but it only made them the more
intractable, and they obstinately insisted on
what they well knew must be refused, and at
last, despising both his threats and promises,
they took the road towards lower Germany, to
join Civilis.

That was a manifest disobedience which they
would have had cause to repent, if Flaccus
had made use of the means then in his power ;
for a legion commanded by Herennius Gallus
was encamped at Bon. If therefore Flaccus
had pursued the Batavian cohorts, they would
have been hemmed in between him and Gallus,
and could not have escaped. But he behaved
so pitifully, that he confirmed the suspicions
of those who accused him of acting in intelli-
gence

gence with the rebels. His first resolution was A. R. 820.
to shut himself up within his camp, as not be- A. C. 69.
ing able to depend on the fidelity of the auxiliaries, nor the strength of his own legions, all composed of new raised men. Then when a fit of courage seized him, he resolved to follow the Batavians, and wrote to Gallus to meet him. But returning at last to his natural timidity, he again changed his mind, and sent a counter order to Gallus.

In the mean time the cohorts drew near Bon, and as their design was to declare their revolt so soon as they joined Civilis, they sent a deputy before them, with orders to tell Herennius Gallus, "That they had no design
" to make war against the Romans for whom
" they had so often fought; but that, worn
" out with a long and fruitless service, they
" were going to seek repose in the bosom of
" their own country. That if they met with
" no obstacle they would pass on without
" committing any act of hostility. But that if
" they were opposed by arms, their swords
" were ready, and should be made use of to
" open them a passage."

Gallus was in doubt what to do; but his soldiers pressed him to venture a battle. Three thousand legionaries, a few cohorts of new raised Belgians, and a great number of militia, servants and followers of the army, as rash before battle, as they are cowardly in it, sallied impetuously out at the camp gates, and surrounded the Batavians inferior to them in number. The latter who were old soldiers, formed themselves into battalions, closed their ranks, and facing every side, soon broke their
enemies

A.R. 820. enemies army, widely extended, but without
 A.C. 69. depth. The Belgians fled, the legion gave way, and retired in disorder to its retrenchments. There the greatest slaughter began: the ditch was filled with heaps of slain, who perished, not only by the Batavian sword, but crushed and stifled each other by their weight, and in the fall killed themselves with their own weapons. The conquerors continued their march quietly whilst they were in the territories of the empire: they took care to avoid Cologn, and executed the affair of Bon as involuntary on their side, and owing to the injustice of the Romans who refused them a passage.

He makes all his troops swear allegiance to Vespasian. In that manner they reached Civilis, who was not puffed up with the pride of a barbarian, nor audaciously elated when he saw his forces so considerably increased. He knew what the power of the Romans was, and being sensible it was impossible for him to pretend as yet to cope with them, he persisted in his plan of dissimulation, and made all the troops under his command swear allegiance to Vespasian. He even solicited the two legions, who had shut themselves up in the camp of * *Vetera* to do the same; but was answered, "That the Romans did not take council from a traitor and an enemy. That they acknowledged Vitellius for their emperor, and would be, faithful to him whilst they lived. That

* Some might think it more correct to call it *the Old Camp*: but I have preferred the Latin name, as less equivocal. *Vetera* was become the name of the place. It is now *Santen*, in the duchy of Cleves, as I have elsewhere observed.

“ That it ill became a Batavian deserter to A.C. 830.
 “ pretend to arbitrate the fate of Romans, and A.C. 69.
 “ that he ought much rather to prepare to
 “ suffer the punishment his treachery deser-
 “ ved.” So haughty an answer inflamed Ci-
 vilis’s wrath. He set out immediately to at-
 tack the camp with his Batavians, backed by
 the succours he had received from the Bruc-
 teri and Tencteri beyond the Rhine, and dis-
 patched couriers to every part of Germany, in-
 viting the people to join him, and share the
 honour and plunder with him.

The commanders of the two legions, Mum-
 mius Lupercus and Numicius Rufus, being in-
 formed of Civilis’s menaces and schemes, pre-
 pared to hold out a siege. They pulled down
 the buildings that had been erected round the
 camp, and were a kind of suburbs to it: for
 the Roman camp, as I have elsewhere observed,
 being fixed and permanent, became a kind of
 town. One important article was, provisions
 were not taken so much care of as they ought to
 have been. The soldiers were suffered to plunder
 the country round them; and by that bad ma-
 nagement, as much was consumed in a few
 days, as, if put into magazines, and properly
 distributed, would have lasted a long time.

Civilis arrived, with the chosen men of his
 Batavians in the centre of his army: the Rhine <sup>He be-
 sieges the
 camp of</sup>
 above and below the camp, was covered by ^{Vetera.}
 the troops he had received from Germany: his
 horse scoured the country, and his ships were
 coming up the river. The images of wolves
 and other beasts, of which the German nations
 made use by way of engines, together with the
 colours of the cohorts who had served so long

A.R.820. in the Roman armies, presented at once the
A. C. 69. dreadful image of a civil and foreign war.

The extent of the camp intended for two legions, though there were then hardly five thousand men in it, rendered the defence of that place much more difficult. But the multitude of sutlers and servants, driven thither from all parts by their fears as to an asylum, was a help to the soldiers, and an ease to them in some respects. Access was very easy to the camp, which was defended only by some slight fortifications: because Augustus, by whom it was first formed, thought the valour of the Roman soldiers sufficient of itself to keep the Germans in awe; little dreaming they would ever be reduced to so melancholy a situation, as that the Batavians should dare to come in person to attack the legions.

Yet so it happened; the Batavians on one side, and the Germans on the other, animated with a national emulation, attacked the camp with great fury. The Romans defended themselves with equal bravery and skill, and baffled the blind impetuosity of their enemies. The barbarians then attempted to make use of war-like engines, in which they had no knowledge. The Roman deserters and prisoners were their engineers, and taught them how to build a kind of wooden bridge, by fastening huge beams together, and rolling them forward upon wheels; by which means the soldiers upon those bridges were enabled to engage the besieged, whilst others under their shelter sapped the walls. But their works were badly constructed, and soon demolished, by the vast stones
the

the Romans threw from their engines: After several fruitless attempts, the besiegers despair- ing of succeeding by force, resolved to change the siege into a blockade. They knew there were provisions but for a few days in the camp, and many useless mouths, and flattered themselves that want and treachery, so usual to slaves, would make them masters of the place, or, at the worst, that time and unforeseen accidents might favour them.

That blockade was an important event in this war. It lasted a considerable time, and was the centre to which all the contrary motions of the Romans and rebels tended.

The Romans had more forces upon the Rhine than were necessary to raise the siege : but the incapacity of their chief Hordeonius Flaccus, fearful, old and gouty ; and still more, the mutual distrusts between the officers, who were all for Vespasian, and the soldiers who were attached in their hearts to Vitellius ; in short, the eternal discords and violent seditions, which were the necessary consequences of those bad dispositions, brought on by degrees a most shameful and fatal catastrophe.

Flaccus being informed how the camp of Vetera was besieged, gave orders for raising troops in Gaul, and the more speedily to relieve the besieged, sent a detachment of the legionaries, under the conduct of Dillius Vocola, commander of the eighteenth legion, a brave and resolute officer. He followed them himself at a small distance, and was the object of the soldiers perpetual suspicions and distrusts, they accusing him of acting in concert with

Vol. V.

A 2

Civilis.

Flaccus
marches
to succour
the be-
sieged.
Seditious
perpe-
tually
breaking
out.

A. R. 830. Civilis. "No, * said they, neither Antonius

A. C. 69. "Primus nor Mucian ever did so great a service
 "to Vespasian's cause. Men are on their guard
 "against declared hatred and open war: fraud
 "and cunning conceal themselves, and are for
 "that reason the more dangerous and difficult
 "to avoid. Civilis shews himself, and takes
 "the field against us: whilst Flaccus, with-
 "out stirring from his bed-chamber, orders
 "every thing for the enemy's advantage. Shall
 "so many brave soldiers be stopt by the infir-
 "mities of a single old man, and the opera-
 "tions of our arms be made to depend on his
 "fits of the gout? Let us rather resolve to
 "kill the traitor, and free our fortune and our
 "valour from so fatal and odious an obstacle."

The soldiers being informed a letter was come from Vespasian, their rage was so violent, that Flaccus was forced to make it public to save his own life. He read it before a general assembly of them, and sent the messengers who had brought it, loaded with chains, to Vitellius. This shew of attachment to Vitellius calmed them a little, and they continued their march quietly on to Bon, where Vocula, who probably was not strong enough to proceed farther, waited his general's coming up.

The sight of Bon revived the remembrance of Herennius Gallus's defeat by the Batavian cohorts,

* Non Primi Antonii, neque Muciani ope Vespasianum magis adolevisse Aperta odia armaque palam depelli? fraudem & dolum obscura, eoque inevitabilia. Civilem stare contra, struere aciem: Hordeonium è cubiculo & lectulo jubere quidquid hosti conducatur. Tot armatas fortissimorum virorum manus, unius senis valetudine regi. Quin potius interfecto traditore fortunam virtutemque suam malo omine exsolverent.

cohorts, and renewed the sedition. They pretended to find in that event a manifest proof of Flaccus' treachery, by having, said they, ordered Gallus to fight, and promised to march from Mentz to his assistance, in which he broke his word, and was the cause of their defeat. They taxed him likewise with not having informed either the other armies, or the emperor, of what passed in Germany; by that means letting the evil increase, instead of stifling it at first, which he might easily have done with the united forces of the neighbouring provinces. To clear himself from this last imputation, the weak general read to his whole army copies of the letters he had sent to Gaul, Britain, and Spain, wherein he desired succours, and made an order, the consequence of which was extremely dangerous, that whatever letters came from foreign parts, should be delivered to the soldiers who bore the eagles of the legions, by which means they were read to the troops, before the general and officers were acquainted with the contents. Flaccus having appeased them for a moment by that condescension, for once exerted his authority, by ordering one of the ringleaders of the sedition to be put in irons. He was obeyed; and the army advanced from Bon to Cologne, being increased on the road by a reinforcement of Gauls, on whom Civilis, had not been able to make any impression.

The suspicions of the Roman soldiers were not removed, and the prisoner envenomed matters, by saying, he had carried and brought back messages from Flaccus to Civilis: and that it was to stifle his testimony, and prevent his

A. R. 820. speaking the truth, that he was loaded with
 A. C. 69. chains in that manner. These speeches made
 impression on the multitude, and Flaccus had
 not resolution enough to remedy it. Vocula
 did it for him. Ascending the tribunal with
 admirable intrepidity, he ordered the prisoner
 to be brought before him, and, in spite of all the
 noise and clamour that was made, commanded
 him to be executed. The bad were intimidated :
 the good, sensible of the necessity of such an ex-
 ample, and the criminal suffered death accord-
 ingly. Vocula's courage gained him the esteem
 of the troops, who unanimously desired he
 should be their commander. Flaccus gave the
 conduct of the enterprize up to him, and retir-
 ing, went to join the troops that still remained
 in quarters.

Flaccus
 retreats,
 and Vocu-
 la remains
 at the
 head of
 the en-
 terprize.
 New Sedi-
 tion.

It was the general who obeyed, and the sol-
 diers who commanded, as we see in this army.
 Divers circumstances contributed to render them
 intractable. They were not paid : provisions
 fell short : the Rhine was so low as scarcely
 to be navigable : for which reason the troops were
 forced to be posted along it, from space to space,
 to guard the parts that were passable, and pre-
 vent the Germans from crossing that river : the
 same inconvenience was productive of two ef-
 fects detrimental to each other : the lowness of
 the waters occasioned a scarcity, by rendering
 the transport of provisions difficult, and was the
 cause of having many supernumerary mouths
 to feed. The drowth, a thing uncommon in
 that climate, was in itself thought a prodigy by
 the ignorant multitude. The soldiers imagined
 that the very rivers, the ancient barriers of the
 Roman empire, refused to serve them ; and
 what

what * would have been thought the effect of A. R. 820. chance, or a natural event in times of peace, A. C. 69. was then looked upon as the decree of fate, and a proof of the anger of the gods.

However, they continued their march towards *Vetera*, and when arrived at Novesium, now *Nuys*, were joined by the thirteenth legion, and Herennius Gallus, already mentioned, was made joint commander of their forces with Vocula. They were then very near the enemy, but not daring to attack them, formed a camp at a place called Gelduba by Tacitus, and is the present of Gelb. There the two commanders strove to confirm their soldiers courage, and enure them to fatigue, by all the military exercises and works necessary to fortify a camp: and in order to animate them the more by the allurements of plunder and booty, Vocula led a part of the army to lay waste the territories of the Gugernians †, who had entered into an alliance with Civilis: the rest of the troops remained in the camp under Gallus's command.

A new accident happened: a barge loaded with corn being stranded, a battle ensued between the Germans inhabiting the right side of the line, and Gallus's troops. The latter being worsted, and having lost several men, imputed it, according to the late prevailing custom of that army, not to their own cowardice, but to their general's perfidiousness. Their suspicions against Flaccus were revived: they accused him
of

* Quod in pace fors seu natura, tunc fatum et ira Dei vocabatur. Tac.

† The Gugernians were a colony of the Sicambri, transported to this side the Rhine, and inhabited the country from Gelb to the island of the Batavians.

A.R. 820. of being author of the treason, and Gallus of A.C. 69: putting it in execution. Laying that down for fact, the seditious were no longer at a loss, but how to account for the circumstances, and those they resolved to know from Gallus, and to force him, by blows and rough usage, to confess what induced him to act in that manner, how much money he had received, and who had been the manager of the negotiation. He was weak enough to accuse Flaccus, after which they put him again in irons. Vologa- res, returning, had power enough not only to deliver his colleague, but even to punish with death those who had used him so ill. This perpetual * alternative of licentiousness and submission, revolts and punishments, in the same troops, is very extraordinary. Their commanders were not able to keep them quiet, and yet had power to punish them.

Incursions
of the Ger-
mans in al-
liance with
Civilla.

Whilst the Romans were thus ruining their own affairs, by their repeated discords and divisions, Civilis was gaining strength. All Germany bordering on the Rhine had declared for him, and he employed his new allies in making incursions in the territories of those who were friends to the Romans. Some were directed to plunder and lay waste the country of Ubians, others the lands about Treves, whilst others again went beyond the Maese, and attacked the Menapians, Morins, and all that northern border of Gaul. But none were used so ill as the Ubians.

* Tanta illi exercitui diversitas inerat licentiæ patientiæque. Haud dubie gregarius miles Vitellio fidus: splendidissimus quisque in Vespasianum proni. Inde scelerum & suppliciorum vices, & mixtus obsequio furor: ut contineri non possent qui puniri poterant. *Tac. Hist.* IV. 27.

Ubians. They were singularly hated, because A.R. 820. they had so far forgot their German origin, as A. C. 69. to change their ancient name for a Roman one, *Agrippinenses*. Faithful, but unfortunate allies of the empire, they were beaten both in their own country, and that of their enemies into which they had ventured : and their repeated defeats encreasing Civilis's pride and haughtiness, made him think of storming the camp he had blocked up ; what likewise induced him to take that resolution, was the uneasiness Vo- cula and his troops gave him by being so near.

He had taken particular care to guard all the avenues, to prevent the besieged from receiv- ing any news of the succours that were so near them. The attack was divided between the Batavians and Germans from beyond the Rhine. The former were to work the engines, whilst the latter, who wanted a battle with all the impetuosity of barbarians, were ordered to attack the place, fill up the ditch, and demolish the rampart. They set on with great fury, and though repulsed, still rallied and charged again. Civilis had such numbers of them, that he did not mind their lives.

They took so little care of themselves, that making great fires in the night, they proceeded to attack the Romans by the light of the flames. The latter saw them without being seen, and were able to single out their men, and shoot and kill the chief and most conspicuous of them, whilst the besiegers could not tell where to direct their blows or arrows. Civilis was sensible of their error, and had the fires put out, but without discontinuing the attack. The fight was continued in the dark, with all the confusion

A.R. 840. the camp, of which they had forced the entrance. A.C. 69. Vocula was surprised at first, but when conqueror, did not make the most of his advantage. By pursuing the enemy, he would at once have raised the siege of *Vetera*. It was not till some days after that he marched against Civilis.

The artful Batavian had taken advantage of that interval, to try to prevail on the besieged to surrender, by endeavouring to persuade them that the succours they expected were destroyed, and that his men had gained a complete victory over them. He shewed them the standards taken from the Romans, and likewise the prisoners; but the last was what betrayed him. One of those prisoners had courage enough to tell the besieged the truth of what was concealed from them: the Germans killed him on the spot, and by so doing confirmed his testimony.

Vocula gains a second victory before *Vetera*, and makes the enemy raise the siege.

Vocula arrived at last, and by the ravages he committed, and villages and places he set on fire, signified his approach, and fully convinced Civilis of falsehood. He was desirous, according to the Roman custom, first to form a camp, wherein his troops might leave their baggage, in order to fight afterwards with less incumbrance. The soldiers would not allow him to follow that wise custom, but with loud cries, to which, with their usual violence, they added menaces, insisted on being led on to battle, without allowing time to draw them up in order. Confused and fatigued by a long march, they offered battle to Civilis, who, depending on the enemy's confusion, as much as on the bravery of his own troops, did not refuse

refuse it. The first onset was not favourable A.R. 820. to the Romans: the most seditious were, as A. C. 69. always is the case, the most cowardly: some however, remembering their recent glory, kept their posts, and encouraged each other to finish bravely what they had so well begun. The besieged perceiving from their walls what passed made a timely sally, in which they greatly disconcerted the Batavians, and victory declared in favour of the Romans, by an accident Civilis met with. He fell from his horse, and a report was spread in both armies that he was either killed or wounded. The confidence with which this news inspired one side, and the consternation with which it struck the other, is incredible. It decided the success of that day: the siege was raised, and Vocula victorious entered the camp of *Vetera*.

He would have done better had he pursued Vocula loses the fruit of his victories. The camp of Vetera besieged again. the conquered, whom he might easily have exterminated. Instead of that, he amused himself with repairing the breeches in the camp, as if to prepare against a new siege: a suspicious* conduct, which could not but give a sanction to the speeches of those who accused him of wanting to protract the war, he so often missed an opportunity of ending.

In fact he lost by his inaction all the fruit of his victory. His sole care was to provide the place with fresh provisions, the soldiers being in great want, to which end he sent carriages to Nuys, to bring them by land, the enemies being masters of the river. The first convoy arrived safe, Civilis not being able to obstruct

* *Corrupta toties victoria, non falso suspectus bellum velle. Tac.*

A.R. 820. obstruct it, for he had not yet had time to re-
 A. C. 69. pair his late losses. But the second was not so
 fortunate. Civilis attacked it between *Vetera*
 and Gelduba, and if the Roman detachment
 was not entirely defeated, it was owing to the
 night that put an end to the fight, but their
 return however was cut off. Vocula marched
 out of the camp to save his convoy, and try
 to force the passes; on which the Batavian im-
 mediately laid siege again to *Vetera*. By that
 means, all the advantages Vocula had gained
 vanished, and things returned to the same
 situation in which they were before. They
 grew even worse. The Roman commander
 abandoned Gelduba, and retired to Nuys: on
 which Civilis took possession of the post he
 had left, and fought a battle with his horse
 near Nuys, wherein he had the advantage.

Another
 sedition.
 Flaccus is
 killed by
 his sol-
 diers.

The Romans had not only the misfortunes
 of war; but the evils of sedition likewise to
 endure. When Vocula left *Vetera*, he took
 with him, besides his own army, two detach-
 ments of the fifth and fifteenth legions, muti-
 nous, intractable troops, ever ready to rebel
 against their commanders. He had ordered a
 thousand of them to go with him; but a greater
 number set out, exclaiming openly during
 their march, and saying, they were resolved
 not to suffer any longer, the miseries of famine;
 and the treachery of their commanders. On
 the other hand, those that remained behind,
 complained of being weakened by the loss of
 their comrades. From thence arose a double
 sedition, at the very moment of their depar-
 ture, some wanting to keep Vocula with them,
 and others refusing to return back.

I have

I have already said, what was the success of A.R. 820.
 an enterprize so inauspiciously begun. The A.C. 69.
 sequel was still more fatal. The troops knew
 that money was come from Vitellius to pay
 the soldiers for his accession to the empire, and
 secure their fidelity. The fifth and fifteenth
 legions put the others upon demanding pay-
 ment from Flaccus; and he gave them the mo-
 ney he had received, but in Vespasian's name.
 The money so received was usually spent in
 feasting and rioting: and on this occasion the
 soldiers, heated with wine, renewed their old
 complaints against Flaccus, and exhorted each
 other to make him at last suffer for his trea-
 cheries. Not one of their officers dared to op-
 pose their fury, heightened and favoured by
 the darkness of the night. Flaccus was drag-
 ged out of bed, and murdered by the sedi-
 tious. They would have served Vocula so too,
 if he had not luckily made his escape disguised
 like a slave: Vitellius's images were replaced
 in the camp, and in some towns of Gaul, when
 Vitellius himself was no more.

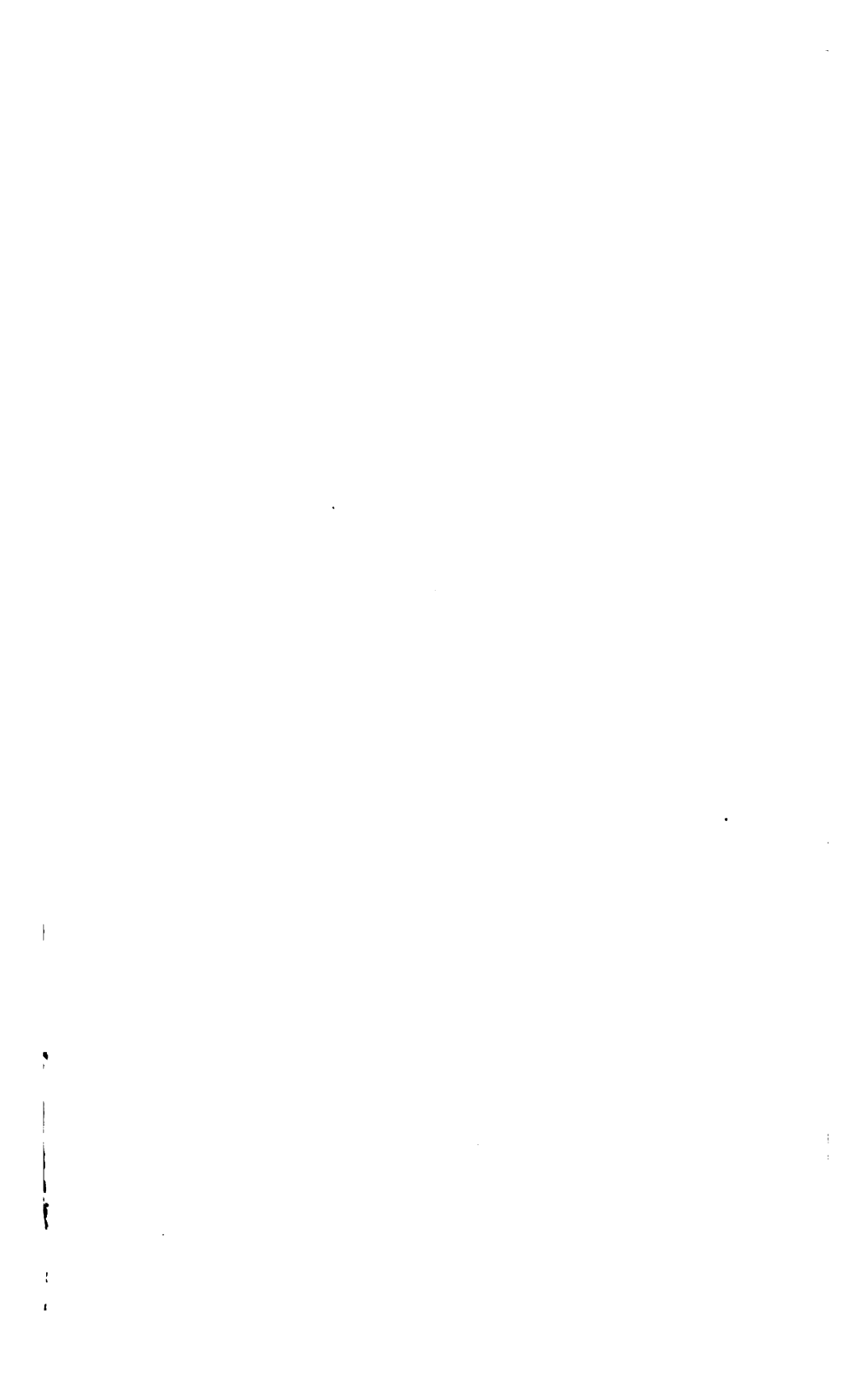
That fit of madness being over, the muti-
 neers finding they had no body to command
 them, began to be sensible of the danger they
 were in, and sent deputies to several of the
 Gaulish nations, desiring to be assisted with men
 and money. Civilis did not give them time to
 receive succours, but falling on them, confus-
 ed and disordered as they were, easily defeat-
 ed and put them to flight.

What en-
 sued after
 Flaccus's
 death, till
 the revolt
 of the
 Gauls.

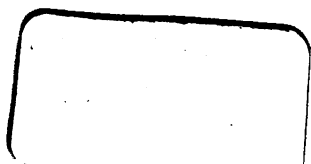
Misfortune was the mother of discord. Three
 legions separated from the others, and submit-
 ting to Vocula's command, who then ventured
 to appear, again took the oaths to Vespasian.

Vocula

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